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C R I T I C I S M S

O N

The DIVERSIONS of PURLEY, &c.

[Price Two Shillings.]

C R I T I C I S M S

O N

The DIVERSIONS of PURLEY.

I N A

L E T T E R

T O

H O R N E T O O K E, Esq.

BY I. CASSANDER.

NUGAS AGIT, SED QUÆ AD SERIA DUCUNT.

ERASMUS, Ep. Lib. iv. Ep. 7.

L O N D O N:

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M DCC XC.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE remarks contained in the following letter were written three years ago, and merely for the inspection of a few friends, who had expressed a desire of seeing the Author's sentiments concerning the Diversions of Purley. This work having been adopted since by many as a proper guide to English literature, it is presumed, that the remarks upon it by a writer, who aims at nothing but a fair representation of truth, will not be unacceptable to the Publick. It is pity, indeed, that a performance, in other respects valuable, and well calculated to open the eyes of the learner with regard to false systems, should remain in its present state, and not be rendered as perfect as the nature of the subject will permit.

E R R A T A.

PAG.	LINE.	FOR,	READ.
10	22	for	for.
13	26	concerns	concern.
30	19	desertoque	desorteque.
31	6	noits	not its.
39	6	onlejon	onléjan.
48	21	ajculan	ajcutan.
Ibid.	—	ajleajan	ajlean.
49	1	utajtean	utaplean.
51	9	Adeling	Adelung.
54	12	Light	Lite.
57	22	Butan	Botan.
58	2	Penanee	Penance.
Ibid.	21	halde	halde.
59	14 and 17	Butan	Botan.
64	26	engaarn	ongaarn.
70	1	theis	this.
72	15	hpyle	hpýle.
74	21	Spik-spelder	Spik-spélder.

A

L E T T E R, &c.

SIR,

THE theory of language is a career in which, from the time of Aristotle down to the present, many an adventurer has run himself out of breath ; spent himself with fatigue, without the applause, or even the notice, of the spectators. You have had better luck. No sooner have you entered the list, but the eyes of all have been fixed upon you ; and great have been the acclamations at the skill and vigor with which you have been observed to set out.

Your remarks on the distribution of language and nature of particles, published some years ago in a letter to Mr. Dunning, and lately republished in your *Diversions of Purley*, have excited a general curiosity. Your thoughts are so new, your manner is so

B

short,

short, so bold, so expeditious, that it is difficult to say which has occasioned most surprise.

It must not be dissembled, however, that in some of your pages you have betrayed a very strong propensity towards inaccuracy. Unless you can get the better of this failing, much of the lustre which awaits your future publication may be obscured by it.

The purpose of this letter, Sir, is to put you, if possible, upon your guard against it. The few hints you have given us may, when cleared of the rubbish which surrounds them, produce some good; but no desirable effect can result from them in the state they are in at present. I shall make no other apology for the freedom of this address.

Before I enter upon more important matters, I must not leave unnoticed your title-page and introduction in your last-mentioned performance.

An elegant and most amiable writer has the following observation on the monuments which are to be seen in Westminster Abbey: "And some of them " are so modest, that they deliver what they have to " say in Greek and Hebrew, and by that means are " not understood once in a twelve-month *." How far you were influenced by these feelings, when to an English performance you prefixed a Greek title, and how far, after having been the miserable victim of two prepositions and a conjunction †, you are

* Addison in the Spectator.

† All I have to say upon this subject has been among the loose papers in my closet, and would probably have remained there twenty years longer, had I not been made the miserable victim of two prepositions and a conjunction. Div. of Purley, p. 102.

likely to suffer from an excess of modesty, I shall not take upon me to determine: but with regard to title-pages, I must beg leave to observe, that they are never so pleasing as when they are intelligible; and wonder much how, after having expressed so much horror at Mr. Harris's and Lord Monboddo's zoophytes*, that is, "words significant without any signification," you could have the courage of placing a brace of these monsters † in your work, by way of frontispiece.

With regard to your introduction, I must confess, that though I have met there with a variety of conversation, on a variety of very pleasant subjects, such as "Effusion of Blood, Total Dismemberment of the Empire, Smoak of London, Boots, Picquet," &c. I have not been particularly struck with it, except where you introduce one of the champions for intolerance, delivering the following maxim, "Whatever is wavering, involved, ambiguous, must of course be false and fraudulent." This piece of sophistry, originally levelled at the Protestant churches, you take up eagerly, and fling it with some violence in the face of the writer of *Hermes*, calling out to him with an air of triumph, "I have it from good authority." That this writer deserves to be chastised, may be true; but that it can be effected with a piece

* Mr. Harris afterwards acknowledges that some of them have a kind of obscure signification—and appear in Grammar like zoophytes in nature, a kind of middle being of amphibious character," &c. *Ibid.* p. 155 and 160.

† *Ἐπεικειώπεια*, or Diversions of Purley; neither of which can give the reader the least idea of the subject in question.

of a broken syllogism borrowed from Mons. De Meaux, is by no means probable: and how you come to have recourse to such an expedient is wonderful; unless indeed you were determined not only to chastise him, but to make his chastisement as ignominious as possible. For what can be more degrading than to be put to a nonplus with such arguments? It is as bad as being brained with a lady's fan *. Thus much for your title-page and introduction. I go over to the work itself.

As Grammar is one of the first arts which probably engaged the attention of the curious, does it not seem extraordinary that the division and distribution of language should remain even to this day so imperfect as not to answer the purpose for which it was contrived? And yet so it is. Instead of pointing out, in a clear and distinct manner, the difference of words, it may be said, that, in many instances, it serves only to confound them. In vain, to remedy this defect, have Grammarians added to the number of their classes. They have always found some words so refractory as not to be reducible to any pre-established class whatever; a circumstance which has increased the labour of the learner, without any additional advantage. I must therefore do you the justice to say, that some praise is your due for having taken this subject into consideration, and employed so much

* That the conjunction **THAT**, and the preposition **OF** and **CONCERNING**, should be made the abject instruments of my civil extinction, appeared to me to make my exit from civil life as degrading as if I had been brained by a lady's fan. *Divers. of Purley*, p. 103.

of your leisure upon it. The point of view in which you have placed it is, upon the whole, well-calculated to bring within the reach of solution some of the difficulties with which it is surrounded.

I speak with restriction, because there is a reason for it. If in some instances you have cleared the ground, you have added to its embarrassments in others, by being too forward in conjecture, too hasty in decision, too apt to displace what is right, and to substitute what is not so in the room of it. You have not given, in short, your system the consistency and solidity of which it is susceptible, and which you were very able to give it, had you been willing to bestow a little more thought upon it. Much of its credit depends upon neat and easy deductions with regard to particles; but, more intent upon the number than justness and propriety of them, your deductions are heaped together without the least discrimination; and suffered, for the most part, to make their appearance before they are fit to be seen, “horridulæ & incomptæ,” as the Latins term it. I must not, however, allow myself the liberty of such remarks without proving them to be just; and this will be done in the following pages.

In your first chapter, which treats of the distribution or division of language, you condemn Grammarians, both ancient and modern, for having supposed that the difference of words may be accounted for merely from the well-known principle, that language was contrived for the purpose of communicating thought. You shew the deficiency of this principle; and, after a few hints on the means of

rendering it more complete, you strike out a new division of language; having, as you suppose, all the advantages of the old one, without any of its defects. The remarks which I have made on this chapter will shew the contrary.

Whether words are considered as the signs of things, or ideas, or operations of the mind; if it be supposed, as has been done hitherto, that the same word may serve to represent two different things or ideas; it is impossible that the division arising from the above-mentioned principle should answer the purpose, and for this plain reason, because one and the same word must in that case necessarily belong to two different classes.

Had you been so fortunate as to view your subject in this light, and in no other, some advantage might have been gained. Your chapter on the division and distribution of language would have been shorter, and, what is of more importance, your new division would have been more complete. For want of having, when you planned it, kept your eye fixed on the above-mentioned circumstance, you missed your aim, as others did before you; and the very same mistakes and inconveniences, which we have to encounter in the old division, distress us with additional force in your new one.

You do not indeed set out from the principle, that there must be as many different sorts of words as there are different sorts of things, or ideas, or operations of the mind. But you build on a foundation altogether as loose and precarious, namely, the use or destination of words.

The first aim of language, you say, was to communicate our thoughts; the second to do it with dispatch.* And as this principle is two-fold, it leads you, naturally enough, to suppose two sorts of words in language: 1. Words necessary for the communication of our thoughts; 2. Words necessary for the dispatch of that communication †.

I shall not here oppose your two-fold principle concerning the use of language; I shall only take notice of your inference from it. Because language is destined to communicate thoughts, and to communicate them with dispatch, does it follow that there are two distinct and separate orders of words, the one necessary for communication, the other necessary for the dispatch of that business? By no means. One and the same word may happen to answer equally well both purposes. And upon recollection we shall find this not only possible, but actually taking place with regard to a great number of words in every language. If we set out therefore from your principle, *the destination of words*, in order to establish a proper division of them, it will not discriminate them any more than their relation, either to things, or ideas, or operations of the mind. The same words will frequently partake of two different classes; and the new contrivance will leave them as indistinct and confused as ever.

Experience wonderfully confirms the truth of these remarks. Words are divided by you into, 1. *Words necessary for the communication of thought*; 2. *Words*

* P. 37.

† P. 63.

necessary for the dispatch of that communication. These are your two grand classes ; and, provided they do keep the words separate and distinct, so that no word deemed necessary for communication be deemed also necessary for the dispatch of that business, they may remain as they are. But in your first class are comprised the nouns in general * ; and among these are the general terms ; and the general terms, from your own †, as well as Mr. Locke's definition, are to all intents and purposes abbreviations ; and abbreviations are every one of them necessary for the dispatch of communication.

Again : in your second class are comprised articles, prepositions, conjunctions, all parts of speech, in short, which do not come under the denomination either of noun or verb, from which they are discriminated by the general title of abbreviations or substitutes, which you give them. But it is generally believed, and we shall have occasion to prove in the course of these remarks, that among the various words which constitute a language, and which are necessary for communication, none posses this last-mentioned property in a more striking manner than those which you rank under the title of abbreviations, that is, prepositions, conjunctions, articles.

You tell us indeed, and that in more than one

* In English, and in all other languages, there are only two sorts of words which are necessary for the communication of thought : and they are, 1, Noun ; 2, Verb. *Divers. of Purley*, p. 65.

† *Ibid. p. 39.*

instance, they do not possess it* : you go even so far as to try to juggle us into the belief of this paradox.

In your third chapter you roundly assert, and seem to plume yourself on the assertion, that without using any other sorts of words whatever, and merely by means of the noun and the verb, one can relate or communicate any thing that can be communicated and related by the help of all the others †. And here you challenge us to try the experiment. You are not one of those, however, who can withstand the force of truth for ever. Soon after this assertion you make ample amends for the boldness of it. You acknowledge the article to be at once an abbreviation, and a word necessary for communication ‡ ; and

you

* I am inclined to allow that rank only (viz. of parts of speech) to the necessary words ; and to include all the others (which are not necessary to speech, but merely substitutes of the first sort) under the title of abbreviations. *Divers. of Purley*, p. 65. *And again* : Whereas abbreviations are not necessary for communication. *Ibid. p. 96.*

† B. Merely substitutes ! You do not mean that you can discourse as well without as with them ?

H. Not as well. A sledge cannot be drawn along as smoothly, and easily, and swiftly, as a carriage with wheels : but it may be dragged.

B. Do you mean then, that without using any other sort of word whatever, and merely by means of the noun and the verb, you can relate or communicate any thing that I can relate or communicate with the help of all the others ?

H. Yes : it is the great proof of all I have advanced ; and upon trial you will find that you may do the same. *Divers. of Purley*, p. 67.

‡ The fate of this very necessary word has been singularly hard ; for

you quote Mr. Locke for the further confirmation of this truth.

These are ugly circumstances attending your new division of language; and it were greatly to be wished you could think of something less repugnant to common sense than words necessary, and words not necessary, for communication. You will say, indeed, the latter are only supposed to be so for the purpose of keeping them separate from the others. But the answer is obvious. If we are allowed to make suppositions in matters of this nature, why should we lay aside the old system? It will do very well. *It is only supposing an imaginary operation or two, as occasion requires.*

But this is not all. You compare abbreviations to those parts of a carriage which have been contrived for ease, ornament, and luxury; and represent them, notwithstanding, as having no connexion with what

for though, without it, the article, or some equivalent invention, **MEN COULD NOT COMMUNICATE THEIR THOUGHTS AT ALL, &c.** Ibid. p. 83 and 96.

You add in a note, “for some equivalent invention. See the “Persian and other Eastern languages, which supply the place of “our article by termination.”—As the generality of your readers are not likely to be benefited by this reference, it being rather out of their reach, I beg leave to propose another in the room of it. The Dano-Saxon language has the contrivance you here mention, or at least something like it. *Porro ut apud veteres Cimbros, vel Danos Gothos, ex nominibus cum articulo vel pronomine in fine affixo nomina composita, totidemque nominum compositorum declinationes quot simpliciorum—Sic illiesmodi nominum et declinationum haud pauca reperiuntur veligia apud Danos Saxonicos Scriptores.* Hickes' Gram. H. S. cap. xx. §. 3.

has

has been contrived for the sake of beauty, or any of the above-mentioned purposes *. You rank under the title of abbreviations, or substitutes of nouns and verbs, all prepositions and conjunctions whatever, though many of them are either nouns or verbs, *ipso facto*, and at full length; as, *If*, *An*, *And*, *Not*, &c. And to sum up the whole, you divide your abbreviations into abbreviations in terms, abbreviations in sorts of words, abbreviations in construction; a manner of dividing by no means logical. *Terms* and *sorts of words* are appellations which I conceive to be applicable to all and every one of your abbreviations, and very improper therefore to establish any specific differences between them. Whether you were aware of this, and took no pleasure in your new division; or whether you really thought it had re-

* P. 33. Alluding to abbreviations in language, you say, "But should any one, desirous of understanding the purpose and meaning of all the parts of our elegant modern carriages, attempt to explain them upon this one principle alone, that they were necessary for conveyance only, he would find himself woefully puzzled to account for the wheels, the seats, the springs, the blinds, the glasses, the lining, &c. not to mention the more ornamental parts of gilding, varnish, &c.

Notwithstanding this comparison, you say, p. 37, "The first aim of language was to communicate our thoughts; the second to do it with dispatch. I mean entirely to disregard whatever alterations or additions have been made for the sake of beauty, or ornament, ease, gracefulness, or pleasure.

As in the foregoing passage abbreviations are evidently considered as additions made to language, for the sake of beauty, ornament, ease, &c. one would naturally conclude, from the clause in the second, that you mean entirely to disregard abbreviations in your work, and yet you make them the principal object of it.

ceived all the finishing in your power ; you no sooner have brought it to light, than you take your leave of it, and pass over immediately to another chapter. You suffer it, indeed, to appear a second time (p. 69.), but so different from what it was before, that it ceases, in some measure, to be the same. Abbreviations are there divided in the following manner : 1. *Abbreviations in terms* ; 2. *Abbreviations in the manner of signification of words*. As second thoughts are generally the best, I am inclined to give this last division the preference, but unfortunately it comes too late to be of any use. These, as I said before, are ugly circumstances in your new distribution of language. They naturally lead to the mortifying inference, that, whatever be your powers of demolishing and destroying, you do not appear to have those of rebuilding what has been taken down.

Many people have long since suspected, as well as yourself*, metaphysics to be a mere cobweb : I will not say with the poet,

“ Fit for scull,
“ That’s empty when the moon is full ;”

but so thin, so airy, so flimsy, that a man may see, touch, feel, and handle it for some time, before he well knows which is the right, and which is the wrong side of it. And what you advance with respect to Mr. Locke wonderfully confirms this suspi-

* The very term metaphysic being nonsense, and all the systems of it, and controversies concerning it, that are, or have been, in the world, being founded on the grossest ignorance of words and of the nature of speech. *Divers. of Parley*, p. 459.

cion: "I consider," you say, "the whole of Mr. Locke's *Essay* as a philosophical account of the first sort of abbreviations in language;" and you add, "Perhaps it was for mankind a lucky mistake (FOR IT WAS A MISTAKE) which he made when he called his *Essay*, AN ESSAY ON HUMAN UNDERSTANDING *." Again: *Had he been aware of this, he would not have talked of a composition of ideas, but would have seen that it was merely a contrivance of language, and that the only composition was in the terms †.*

It is evident from your words, that, in your opinion, Mr. Locke was no better than in a mist when he wrote his famous *Essay*, as he intended one thing, and did another. Now, though this may gratify some, it will not be perhaps so pleasing to others.

Mr. Locke is still a great favourite in our universities. I should not wonder at hearing some young Wrangler, ready primed from those quarters, address you in the following terms:

"Indeed, Sir, it is not Mr. Locke, it is you, that are all this while in a mist with regard to abstract ideas. We understand Mr. Locke very well when he says, *General and universal belong, not to the real existence of things, but they are the inventions and the creatures of the understanding, made by it for its own use, and concerns only signs.* Universality does not belong to things themselves, which are all particular in their existence. When therefore we quit particulars, the generals that rest are only creatures of our own making: their general nature being nothing but

* Ibid. p. 42.

† P. 49.

"the

" the capacity they are put into of signifying or representing particulars." — But we do not understand " you, when you express yourself on this subject in the following manner: *The business of the mind, as far as concerns language, extends no farther than to receive impressions, i. e. to have sensations and feelings; what are called its operations are merely the operations of language* *. We do not call a constellation a complex star, nor a pair of bellows complex bellows, nor a pound of figs a complex fig. But we say *a complex being, a complex name, a complex sign*, because we conceive the particulars to coalesce so as to make but one. Why should we not say *a complex idea*? If in the latter case we conceive an absurdity, we do no more than you do, when you conceive words to be at once absolutely necessary and not at all necessary for communication †. And now we are upon that chapter, what is your principle of dispatch, but a fifth wheel to a carriage, more fit to retard than to accelerate its motion? *Language, say you, is intended not only for the communication of thought, but moreover for the dispatch of that communication.* Upon this subject I shall observe,

" 1. That if any circumstance, beside the desire of communicating thought, influence the mind in the contrivance of language, it must be that of communicating, not so much with dispatch, as with clearness and precision. When we speak, the first

* P. 70.

† See what has been said above concerning the article, p. 11.

" thing

" thing we aim at is to be understood, and to raise
 " in the mind of others the same considerations and
 " affections as engage our own. And whatever be the
 " particular cast of the sign we use, it is the result
 " of that intention. *Men learn names, and use them*
 " *in talk with others, only that they may be understood,*
 " says Mr. Locke; and this is likewise the sentiment
 " of Mr. De Brosse, which has been quoted from you:
 " *On ne parle que pour être entendu; le plus grand avan-*
 " *tage d'une langue c'est d'être claire.* You suppose,
 " indeed, that, notwithstanding this formal declara-
 " tion, he is well aware of the fitness and expedi-
 " ency of your fifth wheel; as he says afterward,
 " *L'esprit humain veut aller vite dans ses operations,*
 " *plus empressé de s'exprimer promptement, que curieux*
 " *de s'exprimer avec une justesse exacte et réfléchie.*
 " But this is mere imagination. Mons. De Brosse,
 " in this latter passage, no more thought of your
 " abbreviations, than he thought of Alioth in the
 " tail of the great bear: he only meant to say, that
 " if men are not always exact and precise in the
 " business of speech, it is because they chuse rather
 " to have done with it, than to give themselves any
 " trouble about it. I observe,

" 2. That there are few words in language whose
 " origin, nature, and particular character, may not be
 " traced from the above-mentioned principle. You
 " yourself allow that it accounts for the introduction
 " of noun and verb. And as to the rest, nothing
 " can be a stronger indication that they proceed from
 " the same source, than the particular energy they
 " have in producing, with the others, the same effect.

" Without

“ Without them, our meaning is vague and uncertain * : but no sooner are they brought into play, than

* According to the very learned Schultens, this energy of the article is no where more conspicuous than in the Oriental languages. Quintilian had advanced, that the Latin language could do very well without the article. Upon which this author makes the following remark: “ *Cæterum articulum non desiderare Latinum Sermonem, glorioſius dictum quam verius putem Ne de Græcis jam loquar, Orientales nostri incredibilem quandam vim orationis cum elegantiſſima brevitate par articulum aſſecuti.* Institut. ad Fundam Linguae Heb. §. civ.

Is it possible that the *incredibilis vis*, & *elegantiſſima brevitas*, here ascribed to the article, are the result of a mere desire of dispatch in the communication of thought ? and should we not look out for some more regular cause in the production of this effect ?—I quote here Professor Schultens, because he was an excellent judge in those matters ; and to convince you of it, I shall adduce but one proof. Long before you thought of it, that is, about sixty years ago, he had laid it down as a fact, that “ GRAMMARIANS HAD ALL ALONG MISTAKEN THE ROAD WHICH LEADS TO THE PROPER EXPLANATION AND ETYMOLOGY OF PARTICLES,” concerning which he expresses himself thus. Institut. Sectio vi. §. xcii. in a note.—*Minus commoda Cl. Altingii inter particulas declinabiles, & indeclinabiles. Ad priores refert pronomina. Ad posteriores, adverbia præpositiones, & coniunctiones.*—*A qui & pronomina quædam non declinantur, & bona pars adverbiorum ac præpositionum patitur declinationem, quippe quæ, maximam partem, sint vel nomina vel substantiva, vel adjectiva. Hoc si perspexissent primi Grammatici, multo felicius naturam, vim, mutationem, & constructionem particularum expedire potuissent.* Again, §. xvi. ^o *Particulas reliquas, sub quibus adverbia, præpositiones, coniunctiones, & interjectiones comprensa minus rite indeclinabiles vocari dictum. Ratio hæc, quod revera declinentur præsertim adverbia, & præpositiones; utpote veri nominis, substantiva vel adjectiva, maximam partem. Rectius in separatas, & inseparabiles dirimuntur. Separatarum classes distinctius notabo: atque sub singulis specimina quædam exhibebo: and immediately after comes a*

ad Prog: 237. D. 4th Aug. 2022. long

“ than it becomes visible and palpable. But, say
 “ you, it cannot be denied, that they wonderfully
 “ accelerate communication. True. But that pro-
 “ perty I look upon as an accessory, not a principal,
 “ in the use for which they were intended. They
 “ shorten communication; because without concise-
 “ ness, i. e. reducing the number of terms, there
 “ can be no communication.

“ 3. As the principle of dispatch in communica-
 “ tion is not necessary to account for the distribution
 “ of language, so neither for the many disputes and
 “ errors about this matter among philosophers. They
 “ wrangled and blundered about it, plainly because
 “ it never occurred to them that particles were, for
 “ the most part, no more than verbs or nouns derived
 “ from ancient language. This accounts much bet-
 “ ter for the matter in question than any thing else
 “ that can be said upon it. And should you ever
 “ meet poor Harris in the walks of some future Lu-
 “ cian or Fontenelle, it is not improbable he would
 “ accost you in the following manner: You were
 “ very severe, Sir! in your strictures upon my Her-

long string of Hebrew adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, which he proves to be no more than nouns in that language; and then finishes with the following observation: *Apud Latinos quoque conjunctiones multæ a nominibus oriundæ, Ut verū, verò, verum enim verò, quemadmodum, quamquam, additum & verbum in quamlibet, quolibet, quovis.*

Mr. Schultens adheres to this plan in all his writings. He endeavours every where to banish from the theory of languages all notions of mystery, all kinds of anomalies, and to account for the nature of every part of speech, by bringing it as near as possible to its first origin.

" mes when above. What induced me to write that
 " book was not the desire of offending you, or any
 " person whatever. I was actuated by the same mo-
 " tive which urged you to write your Diversions of
 " Purley. I wished to discover what had remained,
 " till my time, a secret among my countrymen. I
 " miscarried; because I saw no trace of noun or
 " verb in the words I wished to explain. Hence
 " my flights in the higher regions of metaphy-
 " sics. If I have been too daring, why should
 " you avail yourself of my failure to depreciate my
 " talents? Am I then the only one who has pre-
 " sumed upon himself? and have I dipped my pen in
 " gall to hurt the feelings of any one? Health, spi-
 " rits, ingenuity, may carry a man through any
 " wicked practice in the world we came from. But
 " here, Sir, nothing can support us but the remem-
 " brance of our good actions; and as this is the mea-
 " sure of our happiness, let us endeavour to make it
 " as great as we can by forgetting, I, my Adequates
 " Preventives; and you, your Anglo-Saxon Etymo-
 " logies."

In this, or some such manner, will the Lockists give vent to their rage, when they come to answer your strictures on their Master's Essay. For my part, I shall not undertake to defend the propriety of his expression, with regard to such aggregates of ideas as constitute the *clauses*, *gender*, *species*, and which he calls *complex ideas*. I am not fond of labouring in vain; and it is evident from your discoveries, that, in these matters, it is the easiest thing in the world for a man to do his *utmost*, and miss his aim after all.

I shall only observe, that, as the thing signified must necessarily exist before the sign, there is a striking absurdity in representing the former as a mere effect of the latter: and one is inclined to suspect these to be your notions, when, speaking of abstract ideas, you say, "*it is a mere contrivance of language; the only composition is in the terms, and not in the ideas.*" p. 49. And again, "*The business of the mind, as far as concerns language, extends no farther than to receive impressions; that is, to have sensations and feelings; what is called its operations, are merely the operations of language.*" May it not be inferred from these expressions, that, in your opinion, it is the term that gives birth to the abstract idea, and not the latter to the term? And if you deny it, will not the whole of this laboured dissertation dwindle into a mere logomachy?

As to the circumstances which may have attended the desire of communicating thought, and influenced the nature and order of the signs contrived for that purpose, I will not go so far as to say, with those I have taken the liberty of introducing here, that the desire of dispatch had no share in that contrivance, as it would be an easy matter to prove the contrary. But I must beg leave to observe, that I do not believe it the only, nor even the principal, circumstance to be taken into consideration, in order to account for the division and distribution of language.

The desire which arises in the mind, next to that of communicating thought, is certainly to use such signs as will convey the meaning clearly and precisely; which naturally leads to the use of abbrevi-

ations, as without them, according to your own ideas, this end cannot be attained. p. 245. Abbreviations, therefore, seem to bear a much stronger affinity to the desire of *perspicuity* than to that of *dispatch*. This latter, considered by itself, seems little calculated for any regular purposes. It may produce abbreviations, but of the kind only to which Mons. Le Président De Brosses alludes, when he says, *L'esprit humain veut aller vite dans son opération ; plus empressé de s'exprimer promptement, que curieux de s'exprimer avec une justesse réfléchie. S'il n'a pas l'instrument qu'il faudroit employer, il se sert de celui qu'il a tout prêt* : When guided by the former, it produces conciseness, but conciseness attended with neatness and perspicuity.

After the desire of perspicuity in the communication of thought comes that of variety ; a desire so deeply rooted in human nature, that it looks for the gratification of it in every object it contemplates, in every study it pursues, in every amusement it partakes. “ *All the senses delight in it, and equally are averse to sameness,*” says an ingenious artist. (Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, chap. II.). *The ear is as much offended with one continued note, as the eye is with being fixed to a point, or to the view of a dead wall.* Can it be imagined that it had no hand (if I may be allowed the expression) in the contrivance of found for the communication of thought ? All our senses lead us to a contrary supposition : and experience teaches us, that it interfered in the framing of language, even so far as to give birth to a sort of words which otherwise would not have appeared in it. For what are pronouns but words of that kind ?

kind? The principle of dispatch in communication, on which you lay so much stress to account for the origin and nature of particles, is therefore by no means sufficient for that purpose. It is the truth, but not the whole truth. It may interfere in the contrivance of the article, conjunctions, and prepositions; but as a secondary, not a ruling principle. The only circumstance, in which it acts in the last-mentioned capacity, is apparently in vulgar elliptical forms of speech.

Advertisement, p. 102.

It is generally at the beginning, immediately after the title-page, that this tedious and troublesome part of a book makes its appearance. In yours it does not come forth till about the middle of it; perhaps as good a place as any, especially if the author means seriously to have it perused. For, as the French say, *L'appétit vient en mangeant*, I shall therefore, without any farther hesitation, follow your example, and add here what I have to say by way of advertisement.

I. Anglo-Saxon literature is, no doubt, an object worth the attention of the people of this country. In order to understand the meaning and drift of the excellent laws under which we live, it is necessary we should have some knowledge of the language of those who made them. Your desire, therefore, of promoting the study of it among your readers, and your presenting them, for that purpose, with a table of its alphabetical characters, is liberal, and what one might naturally expect from a public-spirited man as you are. However, as nothing is more likely to prove fatal to that study than unforeseen impediments at the first

setting out, you must allow me the liberty to say, that your table is not altogether so compleat as it ought to be. It wants the wings of Mercury ; the abbreviations, without which there can be no dispatch in communication. This is the first hint I wished to give you by way of advertisement.

II. As I am not without fears about your success, and expect that the Lockists will soon appear in a body against you, I have been examining your out-works again ; and as I find them absolutely untenable, I would advise you to abandon them in case of a regular attack, and to shut yourself up in your capital work, which is of good design and workmanship, and will stand the best battering-ram in the world, provided however you bestow a little repairing upon it. In what follows, I shall point out to you the places where this is most wanted ; and begin with the chapter of the nouns, on which I shall make two remarks.

First, In matters of little or no consequence, men in general, and even the wisest, are very prone to take, upon the credit of others, what they will not take the trouble of examining themselves ; and this most likely was the case when Dr. Priestley asserted, upon the credit of Mr. Harris, that *Moon* is of the feminine gender in the Northern languages, as it is in the Greek and Latin. Had Mr. Harris asserted likewise, that two and two make five, it is more than probable the Doctor would not have taken his word for it. Be that as it may, he was unguarded when he took it for granted that Mr. Harris could not be mistaken in a point so much in his way : but so are you (excuse my freedom) when, writing upon this matter, you boldly

boldly declare, " *that in all the Northern languages of this part of the globe which we inhabit, Moon is masculine.*" I do not know the *Icelandic*, *Laplandish*, or *Greenlandish*; but I know the *Low Dutch* tolerably well, and take upon me to say, that *Moon*, *Maan*, in that language is feminine; and so feminine, that there is no boor in Holland whose ears would not be shocked at hearing one say, *Het light des maans*, instead of *Het light der maane*, the light of the moon. It is particularly unfortunate for you to have made this stumble at your first onset against Mr. Harris.

It were to be wished (and this is my Second Remark), that you had been a little more explicit upon the reason which you assign for the English language not admitting a gender in the nouns of things inanimate. This, you say, is owing to the circumstance of the relation of nouns being expressed in it by the place or preposition. But is not this the case also in the French, Italian, and Spanish? And yet in every one of these the nouns in question class among those which have a specific gender. The truth is, that, in all other languages (not including, however, those I am not acquainted with, as the Samoyede, Esquimaux, Assinipoul, &c.) the relation of gender is expressed, not, as you suppose, by the place and preposition, but by an inflexion, either in the noun or article prefixed to it. But the noun in English being susceptible of inflexion only in a few instances, and the article in none, it is no wonder that a distinction of the specific gender should not take place in it at all with regard to the nouns in question. But it is

wonderful, that some * should have represented it as an ornament, and the result of thought and contrivance, when in fact it is a blemish †, and merely the effect of chance. Any one conversant with the history of the English language, knows that it formerly admitted that distinction, as the Dutch and Frisic do to this day; and that it did not lose this mark of its descent till after the Conquest; when it was so much altered by the mixture of the French or Norman, as to become in some measure a new language. We may take it for granted therefore, that the same circumstance which caused Anglo-Saxon nouns to take a French termination for the formation of the plural, and French verbs English ones for the distinction of tense, number, and person, influenced likewise the gender of their nouns, and caused it to be omitted, and grow at last obsolete, in those that were appropriated to things inanimate.

* Harris and Lowth. By whom we are given to understand, that, for want of this contrivance, no language, except the English, can keep clear of ambiguity and obscurity in the Prosopopoeia. Had it been consistent with the gravity of their character, they might have added the following story, which would have been much more to the purpose. A messenger was sent to the Queen of Navarre, with a letter, and ordered, *de la baiser en la lui présentant*: and so the blockhead kissed the Queen, instead of the letter; which could not have happened, had the French language been without gender for the name of inanimate things.

† It must be confessed, that, by affixing a gender to every noun, the Greek and the Latin will, in many instances, and more particularly in elliptical forms of speech, admit of a conciseness and perspicuity of expression, which is peculiar to them, *Calida lavari, frigidam bibere, &c.* τὰ μάλανα φορεῖτες.

Καλέστι δ' Ἰοκάστην με τέτο γὰρ πατήει

λέπτον.

See Valckenaer in Euripidis Phœn. v. 12.

Interjections and Articles.

As opprobrious language is not usual with you, especially when there is no occasion for it, one is surprised to hear you rail at the interjections, and call them *brutish and inarticulate sounds, which have nothing to do with speech, and are only the miserable refuse of it.* But, when a man has bragged to his neighbours of the spaciousness of his house, has laid a considerable wager, has sworn a great oath, that it will contain them all ; and finds himself, upon trial, more pent than a negro on board an African trader, or a forlorn hope in the house of an Amsterdam Zieleverkooper,—what can he do, but turn out some, and call them a parcel of low-lived scoundrels who intrude themselves into gentlemens' company ?

As you had asserted that there were but two sorts of words in language, words necessary for the communication of thought, and words necessary for the dispatch of that communication, the interjections could not but prove extremely troublesome. You perceived immediately that they could by no means whatever be forced into either of your classes ; and yet they had by prescription an undoubted right to the place they occupied among the parts of speech. To alter your classes, was giving up your words necessary for the dispatch of communication, and that would have been a pity. To meddle with the other clas, was bringing down the whole edifice at once, and that would have been terrible. No wonder if you fietted and fumed, and came at last to the resolution

lution of using, with these *soi disants* parts of speech, the same liberty as the Emperor Joseph used with the monks in Flanders—and so—turned them out. This I take to be the best reason which can be given for your violent and arbitrary proceedings against the poor interjections. And had not some propitious circumstances intervened, you would very likely have been as cruel to the article.

The general terms being by themselves indefinite, as to the extent of their signification, it is evident that some sign is wanted to fix the sense in which they are to be taken. And as this is the office of the articles, it is not less evident that they are as necessary for the communication of thought, as the general terms themselves can be; and therefore it would be madness to refuse them a place among the parts of speech. But they are neither nouns nor verbs; nor can they, in the strict sense of the words, be called abbreviations of them, because they have not a single feature belonging to that species. They were therefore in no small danger of undergoing the same fate with the interjections, if by great good luck you had not contrived to dispose of them, by supposing a second kind of abbreviations or substitutes, besides those you had already contrived. The first were abbreviations or substitutes of known words in a language; whereas the second kind, which was to comprehend the article, is abbreviations or substitutes of words not known in language.

“ From the necessity of general terms (I quote your words) follows immediately the necessity of the article, whose business it is to reduce their generality,

“ and

" and upon occasion to employ general terms for parti-
 " cular ; so that the article in combination with the
 " general terms is merely a substitute. But then it dif-
 " fers from those substitutes which we have ranked
 " under the general head of abbreviations, because it is
 " necessary for the communication of thought, and sup-
 " plies the place of words not in the language ; whereas
 " abbreviations are not necessary for communication,
 " and supply the place of words which are in the lan-
 " guage *." The beginning of this period is unex-
 ceptionable ; but the latter part of it is by no means
 so.

Substitutes of words which are not in language. As these words must needs form a very numerous tribe, it is wonderful, some will say, how you could so easily find out such as were more particularly in want of substitutes. I despise such remarkers, say you. " These are the people who have the accent neither of " Christian, Pagan, or man ; nor can speak so many " words together with as much propriety as Balaam's " ass did †." Hold, Sir !—these are also the people of whom it has been said, with no less propriety, *C'est une nation puissante, Dicu en a bénî la race ‡ !* You will do better, therefore, to keep upon good terms with them ; and the more, as in the present instance you have no manner of advantage over them.

There is reason to reject, in a great measure, your notion of the article. It is a substitute, no doubt ; but if there be cases in which it is evidently the substitute of words which are in the language, why

* P. 96.

† P. 43. in a note.

‡ La Fontaine.

Should we go upon an idle chase, and hunt for words not in the language? Numberless are the instances in which it answers this purpose in the Greek, and in so pointed a manner, that it is hardly possible to mistake the words for which it stands. I shall quote a few; and if you wish for more, you may see a cloud of them in Vigerus's *Idiotisms* *.

It stands for *τός* in the following phrase, *ἄγετθαι τὴν ἐπιθετικὴν* ad mortem rapi—for *ἡμέρα*, in—*τῇ αρρεφάσῃ*, i. e. pridie—for *ἀπορθέγμα*—in—*τὸ τέλος Σολώνος* for *τός* in *ὁ τέλος Δεμοσθένεως*. And if I were to affirm, that, in English, French, or Flemish, there is not an instance in which the definite article does not stand for the name of the gender, species, or difference of the thing in question, I believe I should not go beyond the truth. And I adhere to this hypothesis the more firmly, as, without it, it is hardly possible to account for the article being placed in these languages so frequently before particular nouns. Before the general term it may be said to restrain, or rather determine, the sense in which that term is to be taken, and more especially in the French. But what shall we say, when it is placed before a particular name, as in these instances—*the sun*—*the moon*—*the earth*—*the sky*—*the clouds*? There is no reduction nor restriction whatever in any of these cases; yet the necessity of the article is marked in them as strongly as anywhere. Its destination, therefore, is not confined to the use you mention; it evidently answers some further purpose.

* Cap. III. Sect. 1. Reg. 3.

The human mind is for ever busy in treasuring up every thing which comes within the reach of its perceptions; and, that its stores may be of use and always at hand, they are divided into various classes; and every class has its peculiar name: by which means every perception becomes at once distinct and communicable. By calling over the classes, we find a name for any object whatever; and at the same time that we retain some idea of it ourselves, we can, when we please, make it known to others. In either case, the name of the class is always the first thing which obtrudes itself upon the mind; and that name is mostly understood in the article which immediately precedes the particular name of the thing in question.

SUN, MOON, STARS, belong to that class of beings which are called the heavenly bodies; and it is that class I mean to express when I say, THE SUN, THE MOON, THE STARS. This becomes unquestionable from the following instances. *The Mediterranean* is evidently the Mediterranean Sea; *The Pyrenees*, the Pyrenean Mountains; *The Bermudas*, the Isles so called. Again, *the wall*, *the garden*, *the yard*, manifestly indicate a whole, of which these are the particulars; and the name of that whole is expressed, or at least indicated, by the article prefixed to the name of the particular. The French use it before the names of countries: they say, *La France*, *L'Italie*, *L'Espagne*; because these countries are by them considered in these expressions as parts of a whole; and that whole is Europe. They also say, *L'Europe*, *L'Asie*, *L'Afrique*; and then that whole is the habitable earth. In short, there is hardly an instance

in those languages, in which the reference of the article (which is called the definite) to words known in the language is not palpable*. Your placing it therefore

* For the further elucidation of this matter, I beg leave to quote here a few remarks which I made some time ago on the use of the article in the French language.

L'article étant destiné à marquer les différens sens dans lesquels se peuvent prendre les noms appellatifs & communs ; il semble qu'il devienne, en quelque façon, inutile avant les noms, qui ne pouvant désigner qu'un objet à la fois, sont par cela même incapables de varier, pour ce qui regarde l'étendue de leur signification. Cependant il n'est pas rare de voir ces noms précédés de l'article. On dit, par exemple, *L'Etienne qui a écrit l'Apologie pour Hérodote. Le Cledius qui se déchaîna contre Cicéron.* On trouve dans l'histoire des Juifs un Zaccharie, tué dans le temple avant la venue du Messie. C'est que dans ces façons de parler, on considère l'individu portant tel ou tel nom, comme appartenant à tel ou à tel ordre de personnes, dont le terme commun est d'être toutes appellées de même. De sorte que le nom propre devient ici un nom appellatif, & comme il se prend dans un sens particulier, il faut nécessairement, qu'il soit précédé de l'article défini.

Mais il y a des noms propres qu'on donne à des êtres, en quelque façon uniques, & qui sont néanmoins précédés de l'article. Ainsi, quoiqu'il n'y ait, suivant la façon de penser des hommes en général, qu'un seul soleil, qu'une seule lune, qu'une seule terre, on dit malgré cela avec l'article, *le soleil, la lune, la terre.* Parce que chacun de ces êtres tient à un tout que l'on a toujours présent à l'esprit quand on les veut nommer, & auquel on les renvoie visiblement, en mettant l'article avant les noms qui les désignent. Quand on dit *L'Europe ou L'Asie*, on sent que cette idée en réveille d'abord une autre qui lui sert, pour ainsi dire, de base ; & cette idée c'est la terre en général, que l'on fait être divisée en certaines portions, & qui se présente comme telle à l'esprit, dès qu'on entend nommer quelqu'une de ces portions. Or c'est pour faire sentir le rapport à l'idée qui lui sert de base, et en même temps pour la distinguer

therefore in the opposite light, in order to distinguish it from those substitutes which you call substitutes of words known in the language, is preposterous and unsatisfactory. For though we should allow it to have the use here assigned to it (which we do not allow at present), yet, as it is no its general character, it is wrong to build upon that, and that only, its specific difference, from substitutes of words known in the language. As to the latter, we have seen already with what propriety they are stiled, without any exception, *substitutes*; when most, if not all of them, are in fact the very words of which they are supposed to supply the place. Nor shall I repeat here what I have said concerning your hypothesis, of their not being necessary for communication. I have made it appear pretty plain, that you had yourself no great confidence in it.

guer des autres portions, qu'on se fert de l'article avant le nom qui lui est propre.

En général on peut dire, que l'article avant les noms des êtres que nous avons nommés uniques semble les désigner, ou comme parties d'un tout, ou comme individus de quelque espèce; & dans ce dernier cas, l'article tient lieu en quelque façon du nom appellatif; ou ce qui revient au même du nom de l'espèce. Ainsi *La Baltique*, c'est sans contredit, *La Mer Baltique*; *La Seine*, la rivière de la Seine; *Le Vésuve*, le mont appellé Vésuve. Manière de s'enoncer parfaitement analogue à celle dont on conçoit ces choses, & que l'on retient encore toutes les fois que les noms des individus sont trop vagues pour en donner des idées bien distinctes. Ainsi on dit *Le fleuve St. Laurent*, *Le lac Champlain*, *Les îles Philippines*.

Chapter VI. Of the Word THAT.

Except what relates to politics, which, though ever so sound, cannot with any propriety be introduced into a work of this kind, the whole of this chapter deserves attention. The light in which it represents the structure of language is curious; and if you go on solving in so plausible a manner this intricate business, you will make ample amends for the little recreation we have met with hitherto in the *Diversions of Purley*.

I beg leave, however, to make a few remarks on the word THAT.

There are instances in which it does not seem susceptible of the sense into which you resolve it: such are those where it is connected, in one and the same phrase, with the pronoun personal *It*; as for instance, *It is reasonable that we should do by others, as we would be done by ourselves*; *It is not to be expected that in a state of tryal like the present, we should meet with no difficulties*; *Be it known, that, &c.* Again, when it is preceded immediately by the word *intent* in the dative case, as, *To the intent, that when they come up, they might teach their children the same*.

It seems as if in the preceding instances the word THAT could not admit of your resolution, without introducing both redundancy and confusion. Whatever, say you, be the name which is given to it, whatever be its situation and appearance, it is one and the same word, namely, the article, and stands for THAT THING. But is not the sense of this last expression implied

implied already in the pronoun *IT*, which begins the two first of the preceding phrases? And if so, is there not a kind of awkwardness and redundancy in the article which follows? It is very possible, however, that it will admit of your resolution, without my being aware of it. I am far, therefore, from acknowledging these instances as proofs that you are wrong. I give them only as difficulties which may be thrown in your way. And of the same nature is the next remark.

In the dead languages, the sense of the words which constitute a phrase depends on their termination chiefly; whereas, in the modern languages, this point is principally determined by their respective position. There is but one position, either in English, French, or Dutch, which can be given to the words expressing the sense of the following Latin phrase, *Petrus amat Deum*: the least alteration in it will affect its meaning, and make it either nonsense, or at least the reverse of the sense which is intended. Each word, therefore, in the modern languages, has its particular position, from which it never departs, except for the sake of the metre in poetry. And this position depends entirely upon the specific difference of words.

Whether our forefathers had, or had not, signs by which to express this difference, they certainly were sensible of it; as no word, in their language, any more than in ours, ever took the place of another, but all had their fixed and peculiar station, according as they were either nouns or verbs, &c. As this is a

well-known truth, I shall adduce no proof for the confirmation of it, but pass on to its application.

Is it not remarkable, that the word here in question should occupy different places in the Anglo-Saxon *, and in its kindred the Dutch, the Frisic, the German, according as it stands for a pronoun, or a conjunction; that in the former instance it should be placed between the auxiliary and the participle, and in the latter after the participle in the compound tenses; that as a pronoun governed by the verb, it is placed thus, *Ic hæbbe ðæt ræde*; and when used as a conjunction in this manner, *ic hæbbe ræde ðæt?*—But this is not the only instance in which it assumes a different turn according to the different purposes for which it is used. When in the shape of a pronoun, it has no kind of influence over the words which follow: whereas it makes a total change in their order if it stand for a conjunction. So if, in translating the following phrase, *I tell thee now Siward THAT I have here already set down these few briefes of ancient booke*s, you make *That* a pronoun, the sentence will be in the Anglo-Saxon as follows: *ic recze þe nu Zipeps ðæt, ic hæbbe hepe geretðar feaþa býrna of ðan ealðan bocum*: but if you make it what is commonly called a con-

* To those who attend only to the rules of position in the English, the Anglo-Saxon language may seem uncouth and unconnected, as it did to Dr. Johnson; but that it is so in fact, no one acquainted with the rules of position, either in the German or Dutch, will affirm. These rules form a very important object in the study of those languages, and will apply to the Anglo-Saxon in every particular.

junction, the next arrangement will take place, *ic recge þe nu Zipend Þæt ic heþ gerett hæbbe, &c.**

The same holds with regard to the Dutch: your first example, *I wish you to believe, &c.* translated in that language, will have, if you suppose THAT a pronoun, this appearance, *Ick verzoek u te gelooven dat (ding) Ick bezeer niet gaarn eene vlieg.* If a conjunction, the following, *Ick verzoek u te gelooven dat ick niet gaarn eene vlieg bezeere.* Here you see the verb finishes the second part of the sentence; whereas, before, it begins it. But enough of THAT.

Conjunctions in your system, are not indeclinable or separate parts of speech having a certain manner of signification by themselves, but words belonging to the species either of nouns or verbs, and which by a skilful herald may be easily traced home to their own family and origin. As the origin of the word IF, so easily discoverable, is extremely favourable to this way of thinking, it is with great propriety you begin with it your etymological conjectures.

IF is certainly the imperative mood of the Anglo-Saxon verb *Gifan*; for in this language, as still in the German and Dutch, the imperative mood is formed by dropping the termination of the infinitive mood AN or EN. The imperative mood of the Anglo-Saxon verb *Gifan* can be no other therefore than *Gif.* And this is the very form in which the conjunction IF makes its appearance in old English authors, as you have sufficiently proved. It is made, indeed, to govern the subjunctive mood; an influence,

* Ancient Monuments in the Saxon Tongue, by M. L'isle, Lond. 1638.

some will say, which could hardly be ascribed to it, were it considered merely as an appendix to the verb *Gifan*. But it is not improbable that this circumstance, together with many others, in the modern languages, is owing to the excessive care of some dunces, who having been whipped severely, when young, for neglecting the proper government of conjunctions in the Latin, have contracted the habit of making their equivalents govern with them the same mood in other languages. Now for *An*, from the verb *Anan*, to give.

I have known a public speaker who would now and then take a survey of his audience, and call out (if he espied any drooping noddles or falling jaws) "Brethren, I will tell you a story." As I think this an excellent method of rousing the attention of a reader or hearer, for ever inclined to grow drowsy when the subject is so, I shall not scruple to make use of it upon this occasion.

It is well known that the boors in Friesland, one of the United Provinces, have so far retained ancient customs, as to be, in dress, language, and manners, exactly the same people which they were five hundred years ago; a circumstance that induced Junius the son to pay them a visit, and to pass a few months among them. In a tour I made to that country some years ago, I was at a gentleman's house, from which I made frequent excursions into the inner part of the Province. In one of these, I was obliged to take the first sheltering place in my way, being overtaken by a violent shower. It was a farm house, where I saw several children: and I shall never forget the

speech

speech which one of them, an overgrown babe, made to his mother. He was standing at her breast ; and, after he had done with one, I heard him say to her, *Trientjen yan my 't oor* ; i. e. “ Kate ! give me “ t'other.” I little thought, at the time, I should have so good an opportunity of making use of this story as I have at present.

AN, you say, is the imperative of the verb ANAN, just as IF is the imperative of Gifan. I confess this latter deduction is so plain, so natural, and so satisfactory, that it affords great encouragement to take it as a model for all the rest. But we should not fancy that words exist, or must have existed, because, having adopted a certain method of finding out origins, we cannot possibly do without them. I have been looking out with some anxiety for the Anglo-Saxon verb ANAN, but can get very little information about it. I find, indeed, in King Alfred's will the following article : *Æppr ic an Eadƿaðe minum elðpa runa. First, I give to Edward my eldest son.* And from the expression IC AN, it should seem as if there really existed such verb in the Anglo-Saxon as ANAN. But as this is the only sign of life it has given, as one may say, for these thousand years, I am inclined to look upon that sign as being rather equivocal, and suspect that the true reading of the will is, not ic an, but ic un, from unnan *cedere, concedere* ; this last verb being common in the Anglo-Saxon, and nothing more easy than to mistake an u for an a, in that language, as well as in the English. However, as I have not seen hitherto any manuscript, on whose authority I can ground the justness of my

conjecture, I do not give it you as any thing certain; and if you persist in giving the preference to the old reading, the story of the babe is certainly in your favour; for there is as little difference between An and yan, as between Un and an. With me it will remain a matter of doubt, whether there ever existed such a verb as Anan, the same in signification, and yet different in origin, with Gifan. It is by no means probable, that a people, who had hardly a conveyance for one idea in a thousand, should have procured two such noble conveyances for one single idea. This is a piece of luxury, which even the most civilized nation seldom allow themselves.

The next word you undertake to explain according to your principles, is UNLESS. You suppose it to be the imperative of the Anglo-Saxon verb unlefan, to dismiss. But to those who, like me, judge from analogy, the propriety of this derivation is by no means obvious. *We cannot love God, dismiss be prepareth our hearts. No man cometh to my father, dimiss my father draweth him. Dismiss you repent, you shall all likewise perish.* The turn which language has taken with regard to this expression will not bear such phraseology. The *Latin*, the *Italian*, the *French*, make use here of the word *except*. The *Anglo-Saxon* and the *Dutch* of its equivalent, *utneman uytneemen*..... which seems more natural, and which must have had the preference from time immemorial: since, according to the passage you very properly quote from *Festus*, even the ancient Romans used it instead of *Nisi*. For *Nemut* is a word so like the imperative mode of *uytneemen*,

both in sound and sense, that there is great reason to believe that it is an adoption from the Teutonic verb. But this is not the only reason I can alledge against your hypothesis; it is not even the strongest.

If there be such a verb in the Anglo-Saxon, it must be the same with *onlefon*, a compound of *on* and *lefan*, and the Dutch *ontlossen*: but neither *lefan* in the Anglo-Saxon, nor *losSEN* in the Dutch, signifies *to dismiss*. *Lefan*, in its primary signification, means to *unbind*; in its secondary, to *redeem*, to *unload*, to *set at liberty*. *Solvere, redimere, liberare*, says the dictionary. In the first sense it answers to the English, *to loosen*, i. e. *to make loose*; in the second, the Dutch *ontlossen*. Skinner, indeed, translates *onlefan*, or rather *alefan*, *to dismiss*. But Skinner is often ignorant, says Dr. Johnson *; and I reject his translation, because I am certain the equivalent in Dutch *ontlossen* is not susceptible of it.—But further.

As there is an equivalent in the French of the word **UNLESS** very much resembling it in turn, it is somewhat extraordinary, that it should never have occurred to you, that possibly the one is a translation, or at least an imitation of the other. This equivalent is **A MOINS QUE**. What word more likely to have given birth to *unless*; if we may suppose the latter to be a compound of *on* and *less*? And if the Anglo-Saxon dialect admits of *onlast*, at the last; *onbæc*, at the back; *onbutan*, externally; *on æffe*, opposite; why should it not also admit of *onless*, for **A MOINS QUE**? This conjecture is the more probable, as it

* Preface to his Dictionary.

was not till after the Conquest, when the English became a mixture of the French and Anglo-Saxon, that the word UNLESS was introduced into it; the Anglo-Saxon having used till then, as you yourself have observed, NEMTHE, or NYMTHE, instead of it. And yet you never mention A MOINS QUE; no, not even where you name the words corresponding in other languages to the English word UNLESS. The French SINON, unless you add QUE to it, which you do not, is by no means of the number. It is sometimes used as an adverb in the sense of *otherwise*, or *in default*. *Faites ce qu'il dit, sinon, n'esperez nulle grace de sa part*; *do what he bids you, else expect no favour from him*. Sometimes as, *venia sit verbo*, an exceptive conjunction, when it must be translated *but*. *Je n'ai autre chose a vous dire, sinon que vous en userez comme il vous plaira*; *I have nothing to tell you, but that you are at liberty to do what you please*. p. 214.

LES. *The imperative of Lefan.*

The orthography of this word, I presume to say, is LESS. It is thus Ben Jonson spells it in the passages you here quote from him; and it should seem as if civilized people had no other way of spelling it. You choose, however, upon the authority of Gawin Douglas, to write it with a single s; and, truly, I do not wonder at it, as in that garb it will answer your purpose much better than in the common one. It is possible that LES should be the imperative of Lefan; but LESS can have no pretensions to it: at least not according to your principles; for, if my

memory

memory does not deceive me, you have said somewhere, or at least given us to understand, that words may lose, but not acquire, letters, as they recede from their origin.

You do not depend, however, in so implicit a manner upon Gawin Douglas's skill of spelling, as to adopt it upon every occasion. You scruple not to depart from it wherever it proves unfavourable to some new etymology. A strong proof that the motive I have just now mentioned has no small degree of influence over your judgement in these matters. No sooner has the imperative of the Anglo-Saxon verb *Lejan* shewn itself with you in one form, than it appears in another. In the very next article to that we are upon here, you suppose it to be, not *Les*, but *LEAS*: and why? because you labour to prove there that *Leafleas*, *Botleas*, and the like Anglo-Saxon words, are compounds of a noun and the imperative in question, which would not have been quite so clear, had that imperative appeared in its usual form. But, it will be said, how can *Leaſ* be the imperative of *Lejan*? Verbs may lose, but not acquire, letters, as they recede from their origin. Whether you were aware of this difficulty, and wished to make yourself easy about it, or whether chance so far interposed in your favour as to remove it without your knowledge, I cannot tell. Certain it is, that the verb *Lejan* is here all of a sudden transformed into *Leorjan*; in consequence of which, its alliance with the affix *Leaſ* becomes unquestionable. But *Leorjan* signifies *perdere*, and is the same verb with the English to *Loſe*. Oh, we cannot help

help that, you'll say. We have proved *Leāj* to be the imperative of it, and that's sufficient.

You add in a note *, It is the same imperative *Leās*, placed at the end of nouns, and coalescing with them, which has given to our language such adjectives as **HOPELESS, RESTLESS, DEATHLESS, MOTIONLESS**.

These words have been all along considered as compounds of *Hope*, *Rest*, &c. and the adjective *Less*, Anglo-Saxon *Leāj* †, and Dutch *Loos*: and this explanation is so natural, so clear and satisfactory, that it is inconceivable how a man, who has any notion of neatness and consistency in etymological disquisitions, could ever think of their being compounds of a noun, and the imperative of the verb *Leājan*. *LEAS* and *Loos* are still extant, this in the Dutch, and that in the Anglo-Saxon language; and both answer to the Latin *solutus* in this phrase *solutus cura*. So that *hopeless*, in the literal sense of the word, only means *void of hope*; *faithless*, *void of faith*; a sense so obvious, and so analogous to that which we mean to express when we use these words, that nothing but love of novelty in the extreme could induce you to reject it, in order to make room for the uncouth and awkward expressions, *Hope-dismiss*, *Death-dismiss*

* P. 126.

† *Multa (adjectiva) formantur ex substantivis addendo affixum negativum *Leāj*, vel *Leāje*, ut *peccaleāj* *negligens*; *recommeleāj*, *impudens*; *egeleāj*, *impavidus*; *racialeāj* *sine culpa*. Hinc apud nos *careleſſe*, *fatherleſſe*, *motherleſſe*, *friendleſſe*, *harmleſſe*, & similia. Sciendum vero est *leāj* Anglo-Saxonum deduci a M. Gothico *Lans*, quod significat *liber*, *solutus*, *vacuus*, & in compositione privationem vel defectum denotat. Hickes's Angl. Sax. Gram. iv. §. III.*

Where, in the name of wonder, have you ever found words tacked together in this manner?

In all languages, as far as we know, which admit of composition in words, there is a certain manner which must be attended to, before we presume to make compounds; a manner in the arrangement; and a manner in the choice of those words which are to be joined together. Some are to be considered as prefixes, others as affixes; some will not coalesce; some, on the contrary, run into composition, as it were, of themselves. In this part of the structure, therefore, as well as in all the others, there is a kind of harmony, which must be attended to, and serve as a rule. To take words at random, and to jumble them together,

ut nec pes, nec caput,

Uni reddatur formæ,

is to violate that harmony: and this you do, when you tack an imperative to a noun for the purpose of making but one word of the two. This is a barbarism of the first magnitude, I will not say in the Greek or Latin, but even in the less polished languages. The French and the English have, indeed, their compounds of imperative and noun, but never of noun and imperative. I mean, that, when such composition takes place with them, the imperative is constantly placed before the noun *. But, supposing

* *Un coupe-jarret*, a banditto; *un-boute-feu*, an incendiary; *un tire-bouchon*, a cork-screw. So in English, a *cut-purse*, a *catch-penny*, &c. We say, indeed, a *tooth-pick*; but this is evidently corrupt from *tooth-picker*.

it was not, neither the French nor the modern English are, in that respect, a proper standard whereby we can determine the genius of the old language. Not the French, because it has little or no affinity with it; nor the English, because it leaves here its original and more forcible manner, to adopt that of her rival. The Dutch, as it has preserved to this day the Anglo-Saxon manner of composition, and admits of no other whatever, is undeniably the better rule to follow on this occasion. But there are no compounds of the French kind just mentioned to be met with in that language: and as to those you here obtrude on your readers, nothing can be more repugnant to its true nature and genius; a strong reason to believe that they are not admissible in the Anglo-Saxon; and indeed, if they were, the composition would not have been confined to one single instance. More verbs than one would have had their imperatives affixed to nouns, in order to make compounds with them. You would not have failed to quote a few instances where this kind of composition takes place; and we should have had something more than your bare word, by which to regulate our belief in this particular.

I have not done yet with *hope-dismiss* and *faith-dismiss*; I beg leave to add one objection more to that manner of composition in language. If, as you contend, *Loos* be the imperative of *Loffen* in Dutch, how comes the noun prefixed to the imperative to terminate with an E, which is the constant and invariable sign of the ablative case? They write and pronounce, *vrugteloos*, fruitless; *godeloos*, impious; *finneloos*,

finneloos, senseless; *lusteloos*, listless. If *Loos* were an active verb, they would write and pronounce *vrugt-loos*, *godloos*, *finloos*, *lustloos*, which is the form of the accusative.

As it is expected you should advance something in defence of your new-fangled compounds, you make two efforts for that purpose, but both so feeble and ill-directed, that neither of them makes the least impression.

With this view you say, *I think, however, there will be little doubt about this derivation, when it is observed, that we say indifferently either sleepless or without sleep, &c. i. e. Dismiss sleep, or Be out sleep. So for those words where we have not by habit made the coalescence, as the Danish Folkelös and Halelös, we say in English, without people, without tail.*

We say indifferently either *sleepless* or *without sleep*. Ergo, there can be little doubt of *LESS* being the imperative of the verb *Lejan*, &c. Can there be any thing more preposterous than the stress you lay upon such arguments? and who but a man infatuated with the love of singularity would produce them?

You add, *it is observable, that, IN ALL NORTHERN LANGUAGES, the termination of this adjective in each language varies just as the correspondent verb, whose imperative it is, varies in that language.*—After which comes an exhibition of the verb *Lejan* in no less than six different languages*. But here again you suffer

* As this exhibition is rather curious, I shall submit it to the inspection of the reader.

suffer yourself to be carried away by your favourite system, so far as to venture upon ground where you can do nothing but expose your want of skill. I do not know the Swedish, nor the Danish, nor the Gothic. But I know enough of the Dutch to affirm, without fear of being mistaken, that the imperative of the verb **LOSSEN** is **Loss**, and not **Loos**, as you put it. Nor can you plead here the negligence of the printer, as no other imperative suited your purpose so well as **Loos**. And as I find you so often and so egregiously tripping in one of the six languages you here appeal to, how can I depend upon what you affirm of the others?

I cannot help taking notice here of the very extraordinary sentence you have been pleased to pass upon Johnson's Dictionary; a work which, now for many years, has been a kind of standard, by which even the most judicious, have ascertained the signification of words in the English language, and which therefore ought not to be depreciated, without giving weighty reasons for so doing. It has, no doubt, its blemishes: but they are not of the kind, *quas incuria fudit*. On the contrary, they may be called the result of the oppo-

	Termination.	Infinite of the verb.
Goth	λλNS	λλNSçλN.
Anglo Saxon . .	Leaf	Leōfian.
Dutch	Loos	Lossen.
German	Los	Lösen.
Danish	Lös	Löser.
Swedish	Lös	Löš.

Div. of Purley, p. 218.

N. B. It is in this table the Anglo-Saxon verb *Lefan*, *silvera*, is transformed into *Leōfian*, which has been noticed before.

site cause, too much nicety and exactness. Had the author been less minute in distinguishing the various significations of words, he would have saved himself a great deal of trouble, and his work would not have been the worse for it. As it is, we have nothing better of the kind. The explanations are commonly just and clear; the quotations numerous, and from the best authorities: which inclines me to believe, that when you stigmatize it *as a most contemptible performance, a reproach to the English nation, one third of it being as much the language of the Hottentots as of the English*; you mean only to animadver on such of the Doctor's definitions, divisions, and derivations, as do not perfectly coincide with your manner of dispatching that business. I am the more willing to make this supposition, as you do not enter into particulars; and as there is perhaps no point in which the Doctor differs more essentially from you, than in the etymologies to be assigned to English particles.

Your mentioning the Hottentots, in a passage I have just quoted from you, puts me in mind of your very curious table of Anglo-Saxon verbs*; one third of which, if I may be allowed the expression, are of your own hatching, and some of them so cruelly mangled in the hatching, that they have not a limb left entire and in its place.

Beon-utan! Fyf-San-utan! Mercy upon you for having found so much fault with others!

Nen Dī, non homines, non concessere columnæ!

Why man, there is not a greater adulterator of lan-

* P. 185.

guages than you in the world ; and never did Mr. Champante, the Amsterdam sealing-wax maker in London, violate in a more flagitious manner the purity of the Belgic Dame in his Dutch mottos *, than you that of the Anglo-Saxon in your table.

UTAN, according to the common way of thinking, is put down in the dictionaries as being both an adverb and a preposition ; but, whatever you please to make of it, in neither of these capacities can it be joined to the verb in the manner you have done, without violating the most obvious rules for the arrangement of words in the Anglo-Saxon language ; not as an adverb, because, though a word of this denomination is added to a verb in order to express the circumstance of the matter in question, yet it cannot coalesce so as to make a compound word with it ; nor as a preposition, because, when this part of speech is to make a compound with a verb, though in other moods it is occasionally made to follow, yet, in the infinitive, it is constantly made to precede it †, and to write anyðan-utan, aȝulan-utan, aȝlearan-utan,

* *Wel brand en vast houd.*

† In the German, Dutch, and Anglo-Saxon, the rule is this : in compounds of verb and preposition, the preposition is always prefixed to the verb in the infinitive, as in *unlejan*, *solvere*, *Fortneaban* *concurreare*, *Inlæðan* *introducere* : but, in other moods, some of the prepositions may be put after it ; and this is the case, for instance, with the prepositions *up* and *ute*.

Infinit.	Præt.	Imperat.
Upȝtandan	ic upȝtod, or ȝtod up	Stand up
Uȝtizzan	ic uȝtæt, or ic ȝæt ute	Sitt ute.

For want of having attended to this rule, the Editors of Lye's Dictionary

utan, instead of *utan*þan, *utaſcutan*, *utaſtean*, is as bad as to write in Latin *Pellere-ex*, instead of *Ex-pellere*.

But I go farther: I doubt whether the Anglo-Saxon verb *Weorðan* be susceptible of the compound form you here give it, and I have two reasons for my doubts; 1. I am certain the Dutch **WORDEN** is not; 2. . Both in this language and in the Anglo-Saxon it answers to the Latin **FIERI**; to the French **DEVENIR**, and to the English **TO BECOME, TO HAPPEN.** It is joined to passive particles to express the passive voice; but so as to represent, at least in the present and imperfect, what is, or what was doing, and not what is, or was done. *þeorþað be neorðe of ælcne ape.* *Privabantur omni dignitate.* *þat hi an neorðe þeorðan, ȝ Goðer ȝigðe lupian.* *Ut concordes fiant & Dei justitiam ament.*

Similar to *þeorðan-utan*, and *Beon-utan*, is **Anan-að** in your table: a verb not likely to make

Dictionary have thought themselves authorised to put the preposition last in the infinitive mood of such verbs as they have found occasionally separated from it, when the mood will admit of that arrangement, and have by that means made, as it were, a separate order of verbs of them. So in the preposition *ut*, they put *abriſan ut*, *þunpan ut*, *offlean ut*, an arrangement which causes one and the same verb, in more than one instance, to appear twice, i. e. once in the article of the preposition, and again in that of the verb itself; which is the case, for instance, in the verbs *uta-ðniſan* and *utlætan*. However, when they allow themselves that liberty, they keep the verb and preposition separate. The fancy of joining them together, so that the preposition comes last, and makes, notwithstanding, a compound with the verb, is entirely the Author's.

its way in the world, as it consists of such heterogeneous parts as never were put together, and labours under many more unfavourable circumstances. The conjunction *AND* is, you say, the imperative of *Anan-as*, and consequently its literal meaning is, *Da congeriem*. I wish to translate *Da congeriem* into English, or French, or Dutch; but whether from slowness of apprehension, or from a real impossibility, in none of these languages can I find an expression adequate to the purpose. And how *Da congeriem* can ever be accounted with the wings of Mercury, so as to pass currently for one of your *ἔπεια τερπούντα, or winged words,* is to me incomprehensible. Leaving you, therefore, to manage that busines, I shall only observe, that, in my opinion, *AND* is the imperative of the Dano-Saxon, or rather Franco-theotis verb, *Andan Spirare*, from *Anda Spiritus*; and means simply *Draw your breath*; that is, *Stop, pause a moment, Sir.* And should you ask, from whence I have my intelligence concerning the verb *Andan*, my answer will be, from the same quarter which furnished you with *Anan-as, dare congeriem* *. I now proceed to

EKE, where I shall have occasion to notice another kind of mistake, into which you are very apt to fall.

* The fact is, that we know very little of the origin of *AND*: it lies most likely buried in the ruins of some ancient language, of which we do not know so much as the name. The learned Hickes says, that “ *AND*, in the Franco-theothis, *Ande, Endi, Inte, Int,* “ *Unde, Und*, is a preposition among the Goths, answering to the “ Latin *In, Coram, Contra, Adversus*: and that so it comes to be a “ prefix to so many nouns and verbs in the Anglo-Saxon to make “ with them a compound.” Gram. Anglo-Sax. Cap. xiv. §. 37. This is the whole that can be said with any certainty of *AND*.

You observe, that the conjunction in Dutch is *Ook*, from the verb *OOKEN*; and in German *AUCH*, from the verb *AUCHEN*. I have conversed frequently in Dutch—I have read many Dutch authors—but neither in books nor conversation do I remember ever to have met with this verb *OOKEN*; nor is it to be found either in *Sewel's* or *Halma's* Dictionary. With regard to the German *AUCHEN*, all I can say is, that it is not to be found in the Dictionaries I have consulted, among which is *Adeling's Wörterbuch*, allowed to be the best of all. You have here, however, the authority of *Junius*, who puts down these verbs as being the origin, the one of *Auch*, the other of *Ook*; but, I have your's to say, that he was sometimes very careless and ignorant; and to add the following moral reflexion, which I find ready cut and dried in one of your pages: *How easily do men take upon trust, how willingly are they satisfied with, and how confidently do they repeat after others, false explanations of what they do not understand!*

I see we have not done yet with the imperative of the verb *Alejan*. *ELSE*; formerly written *ALLES*, *ALYS*, *ALYSE*, *ELLES*, *ELLUS*, *ELLIS*, *ELLS*, *Els*, and now *ELSE*, is no other, in your opinion, than the imperative *Ales* or *Alys*, of *Alesan* or *Alysan* *dimittere*. As my taste for the Anglo-Saxon has never induced me to attend to the various spellings of one and the same word in the language, I should think myself ridiculous were I to contradict you with regard to the various ways of writing the word *ELSE*. I shall only remark, that had your quotations (by which you mean, I suppose, to prove the truth of what you

advance) been in favour of *Alys*, or *Alyse*, instead of *Alles*, they would have been more to the purpose, as the two former come nearer to the imperative in question than the latter.

This mistake, however, can make no great difference with regard to the sum total of the credit you are likely to gain by this new discovery. It is evident, that all these different readings of the word **ELSE** are resolvable into one and the same sound, viz. that which is expressed by **ELLES**. And as this is the form in which the Anglo-Saxon word for **ELSE** makes its appearance generally, I shall take it for granted that it is the original one, and with the more confidence, as it has been given to it by Skinner, Minshew, and Johnson. These authors agree in deriving it from the Greek $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega\varsigma$, or the Latin **ALIAS**: perhaps they are mistaken in doing so. There is, indeed, as much reason to suppose that the Greeks and Latins borrowed the word from the Germans, as that these borrowed it from them; but that they had it in common will hardly be contested by those who attend a moment to the similarity of the sound and the sense in each of these languages; and consider, at the same time, the number of words, both in the Greek and the Latin, avowedly of German extraction, or at least of the same origin with their collaterals in the German language.

You will say that, notwithstanding what has been alledged, your hypothesis is still as good as that of Skinner and Minshew, as both are grounded on conjecture only. But I cannot allow the derivation of **ELSE** from, or its alliance at least with, the Greek

and Latin corresponding words to be a mere conjecture, as it is supported by fact. *ÆL* or *EL*, in the sense of *ἄλλως*, or *alias*, is still extant in the Anglo-Saxon language; and there are traces of it not less evident in the Dutch and Danish. The first part of this assertion is grounded on the following words, *Alcop*, *alias Alþeod*, or *Æl-þeodīg*, *alienus peregrinus*, to be found in any Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. The second in the Dutch word *ELDERS*, and the Danish *ELLERS*, signifying, both of them, *Elsewhere*. In both *EL* seems the radical word, and *ERS* only a termination, perhaps that of the genitive case, in order to express a circumstance of time, place, or manner. *AL* and *EL* may then be said to convey the same idea as the Greek *ἄλλως*, and the Latin *Alias*; and if so, why should we have recourse to the verb *alefan* to find their origin? I have already observed, that it is not susceptible of the signification you have all along affixed to it as its primary one; but let us suppose it to signify *to dismiss*, and nothing besides; we shall find many phrases in which *ELSE* will hardly bear to be resolved into *hoc dismiso*; witness the following, *Nothing Else*, *how Else*, *what Else*, *where Else*.

That, *THOUGH*, in the English, *Deah*, in the Anglo Saxon, and *Doch*, in the Dutch, are one and the same word, signifying one and the same thing; and that there is such a verb as *Ðafian*, or *Ðafīgan*, in the ancient language, is unquestionable. But that the first mentioned words are the imperative of the verb *Ðafian*, or *Ðafīgan*, is not quite so clear. *THOUGH*, indeed, is pronounced by some *THAF*,

THAUF, or THOF, and by others THO'. But if we suppose (and it is very natural, and even necessary, to suppose it) that THOUGH had originally a guttural sound at the end (as it still has in the Dutch, and probably in the Danish), the above-mentioned pronunciation may be accounted for from other circumstances besides that which you imagine. It is well known, that in words which have gutturals, and are common to the English and Dutch language, that found is either dropped in the English, or changed into that of F: thus, *Nacht* and *Light* are pronounced *Nite*, *Light*; and *Genoeg*, *Kuch Sacht*, *Enouf*, *Couf*, *Soft*, in English. This true and fair representation of the matter, if it do not absolutely supersede your derivation of *Though*, renders it at least very uncertain. But I have something besides to alledge against it.

The true Anglo Saxon word for THOUGH is Ðeah. For what reason this word is kept out of sight by you, I do not know: it is certain, however, that if it be an imperative, it is not that of the verb Ðafian, or Ðafigan, which is Ðaf, or Ðafig. You would persuade us, indeed, that this is the form THOUGH still assumes in the provincial pronunciation of it; but we have seen what dependence can be had upon this assertion. As Ðeah cannot be called the imperative of Ðafian; so neither can *Doch*, in Dutch, pass for the imperative *Doogen*, or *Gedoogen*, in that language. As well might one say, that FED in English is the imperative of *Feed*; *Rat* of *Rate*; *Bit* of *Bite*. Not to mention, that it is frequently added to imperatives, to urge in a particular manner the thing in

in question. As, *Laat toch, toe, Suffer me, or Permit me, I beseech you.* In which case, *toch* separates the verb from its affix, which it could not do, if it were an imperative.

In your next article * you represent *Bot* and *But* as having been originally, that is, in the Anglo-Saxon, two words very different in origin, as well as signification. Would you be so obliging, Sir, as to let us know, in what Anglo-Saxon author one is likely to see this nice distinction observed, so as to be convinced of its reality? You quote, indeed, Chaucer and Gawin Douglas; and, lest the quality should be contested, you endeavour to make it up in quantity, having adduced no less than twenty passages from the latter, who, it should seem, favours your opinion, and has given you a handle to palm it upon others. But on what ground can he be called, I will not say, an original, but an Anglo-Saxon writer? I apprehend, that neither he, nor Chaucer who lived an hundred years before him, will pass for one of the number among those who consider how much the language had been vitiated at the time they lived, by the importation of foreign words †. Skinner taxes the last-mentioned of the two to have imported whole cart-loads of them; you will give me leave, therefore, to suspend my judgement on this your observation, till you can produce some better authority for it.

I have my doubts also with regard to the origin

* P. 232.

† See Johnson's Preface, Art. Chaucer.

you assign to *Bot*, supposing it to be a word really existing in the language.

The imperative mood, indeed, has ever been a great favourite with human nature, at least so far as it has the disposal of it. From the monarch to the mule-driver; from the burgomaster to the master of the treckschuyt; or, if you do not like profane examples, from the dean to the verger, men are fond of it; and there is no doubt, but, as soon as they were able to use moods in any way, this was the first they put in practice. No wonder, therefore, if some who are wishing for reputation in the etymological career, but apt to grasp at the laurel before it is within their reach, should, when they meet with words of an obscure and dubious cast, exclaim without hesitation, “An Imperative! An Imperative!” Aye, aye, men had never any objection to imperatives for their own use.

No wonder also, if you who have undertaken to explain the most difficult part of the language, should indulge in the same fancy, and call out upon every occasion, “An Imperative; no other than an Imperative!” But what surprises me, is the readiness with which you find at once both an infinitive to your imperatives, and a sense to your infinitives, which suits to a hair the purpose in question.

But, you say, *is corruptly put for Bot*; and the latter is the imperative of *Botan*; i. e. to superadd, to substitute, to atone for, to compensate with, to make amends with, to add something more in order to make up a deficiency in something else*. And you add in a

* P. 244 and 250.

note,

note, *Johnson and others have mistaken the expression, TO BOOT, (which still remains in our language) for a substantive, which is indeed the infinitive of the same verb, of which the conjunction is the imperative; as the Dutch also still retain BOETEN in their language with the same meaning.* The composure with which you advance your paradoxes, is, indeed, admirable.

As I cannot boast of having read all the Anglo-Saxon books and manuscripts to be found on this our hemisphere, it would be improper to tell you that I never met the Anglo-Saxon verb BOTAN used in the sense you are pleased to give it, viz. TO SUPERADD, TO SUBSTITUTE: I shall only observe, that it is not to be found, at least not in the sense here in question, in Somner's or Lye's Dictionaries, or Benson's Treasure; and as you appeal to the verb BOETEN in Dutch, and mention it as having the same meaning which you suppose BOTAN to have, I must beg leave to add, that the Dutch verb signifies *to make amends, to satisfy, to atone for*, and never *to superadd*. Dr. Johnson has also ventured to give us his sentiments with regard to the Anglo-Saxon verb Butan *; and, more cautious than you are in general, he has confirmed it with proper authority. The following are his words: BOTAN, *to repent, to compensate: as,*

*He is wis that bit and bote,
And bet bisoren dome.*

If he be right (and there is great reason to believe he is) BOTAN in the Anglo-Saxon is exactly the same verb, in point of signification, as the Dutch BOETEN.

* See his Dictionary in the word TO BOOT.

To this last verb is allied the noun **BOÈTE**, **PENALIE**, **PENALTY**, **FINE**, says Sewell; and to the Anglo-Saxon **BOTAN** is allied **Bot**, *recompense*, says Johnson very properly, *or fine paid by way of expiation*. **BOÈTE** and **Bot** may very safely, therefore, be taken for the same word. To **BOTE** in the Anglo-Saxon is applied properly to what is paid or done by way of making amends for an offence; and thence, in a secondary signification, to what is paid or done in addition to the value offered or received between two contracting parties: in which sense it answers to the common expression in English, *into the bargain*; and to the French, *Par dessus le marché*. And as these expressions may be extended, in both languages, to whatever exceeds, either in speaking or acting, the object first in view; so the Anglo-Saxon **TO BOTE** takes a greater or a less latitude of signification, as occasion requires. I shall give, for example, a passage borrowed from Somner, and translated for the purpose into English and French.

Ang. Sax. *Ofte he to bote halde gecpedon þ*
hie ðer piger pigh te ne pohton.

Lat. *Sæpe insuper ei audacter dixerunt, se vietorem*
nibili facere.

Eng. *They told him into the bargain, more than once,*
and boldly, that they regarded not the conqueror.

French. *Ils lui dirent par dessus le marché, & cela*
avec hardiesse & à différentes reprises qu'ils n'avoient
pour le vainqueur que du mépris.

I use here the words *into the bargain*, and *par dessus le marché*, not because I think them elegant expressions, but because they are the best to render the sense

ense of the Anglo-Saxon word *to bote*; and prove evidently that words may, in a remote signification, convey an idea no ways connected with the primary signification of the root from which they spring.

If any one were to tell you that BARGAIN in English, MARCHE, in French, and INSUPER in the Latin, in consequence of the meaning they here assume, are all descended from verbs, the primary signification of which is to SUPERADD, or SUBSTITUTE, would you not think this a strange way of reasoning? Now I am desirous to know what ground you have to go upon with regard to the signification of the Anglo-Saxon verb BOTAN. It can be no other than this: **To bote**, if not the verb BUTAN itself, is nearly related to it. **To bote**, Anglo-Saxon, is the same word as **to boot** in English, and signifies *insuper*; ergo, *Butan* signifies **to SUPERADD, or SUBSTITUTE!** Armed with some such argument, it is pleasant to hear you pass the following sentence. *Johnson and others have mistaken the expression to boot for a substantive; which is indeed the infinitive of the same verb of which the conjunction is the imperative.* Permit me to say, there is not the least ground for this stricture. **Boot** is evidently the same word with the Dutch **BOETE**, and differs from it in the spelling only. **BOETE**, to my certain knowledge, is not a verb, but a substantive. **To bote**, Anglo Saxon, moreover, cannot be an infinitive; because no words coming under that denomination are likely any more in the Anglo-Saxon than in the Dutch to end in **OTE**, or any termination exhibiting a consonant between two vowels; but it may be a substantive; and that it

actually

actually belongs to this class is evident, from the inflexion it undergoes in consequence of the preposition being prefixed to it. This inflexion is the *E* at the end of it, the invariable mark in the Anglo-Saxon of an oblique case in nouns of that class. All nouns masculine in that language, ending their nominative with a consonant, take *E* in the dative or ablative: **God, GODE; ENGEL, ENGELE; GROUND, GROUNDE.** *Ða cƿæð* Zacchaniæ *to þam enȝele, &c.* *Ða and-ȝapoðe* him *þe enȝel.* *Ic eaom Ȥrabriel ic ȝtande* befojan *Gode* *.

I could quote more passages to prove my assertion; but as it is hardly possible to add any without being tiresome, I shall be permitted, I suppose, to come to the following inference.

There is great reason to believe that Johnson and others have not mistaken the expression **TO BOOT**, when they called it a substantive; but that you were egregiously so, when you made an infinitive of it.

I am now come to the word **BUT**, in the sense of **WITHOUT**, or the Latin **NISI**. You give it as your opinion, that it is a contraction of the Anglo-Saxon **Bute**, or **Butan**, and answers to the Dutch **BUYTEN**; and thus far I perfectly agree with you: but when you add **BUTE**, or **BUTAN**, is neither more nor less than **BE OUT**, i. e. an imperative of the verb **ute-beon**, I beg leave to consider a moment.

Se that hinne selve uorget.

• • • • • • • • • •

He sal comen on euele stede

But Gode him be milde.

* See Specimen of Ancient English in Johnson's Preface.

He who forgets himself shall come to an evil fate,
Be out the Lord be merciful unto him.

There nis met bote frute

There nis halle bure no bench.

Bot water man is thurst to quench.

There is no meat, be out fruit ; no hall, no house, no bench : nothing be out water for a man his thirst to quench.

As an imperative implies a command, and this a subject to whom it is given, the person who says, *Be out fruit, be out water*, must be supposed to give his orders to somebody. Now, unless we admit he is here addressing his own words, I confess I cannot see the subject to whom his speech is directed. We say indeed, *Be it known, be it remembered* ; but then, *to you, or by you*, is understood. We say, *If you come*, i. e. *give you come* ; but there again the subject is visible ; however, let us not be too nice, we often hear of a man eating his words : why should we not believe that a man can address his words ? the one is not more impossible than the other. If there be any real objection against your explanation of BUTE or BUTAN, it must be the following.

Numberless are the instances in which Be is employed as a prefix ; and in others as a preposition in the sense of *circa* *juxta*, *per*, *in*, *secundum*, in the Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, or English. And unless we can assign a signification to it, which will make it one and the same word, whatever be its appearance, it matters not to name one which will suit only in this or that instance. For you say very properly, “ *I do not allow that any words change their nature, so as to* ” *belong*

“belong sometimes to one part of speech, and sometimes to another, from the different ways of using them.”

Whatever, therefore, be that in which the word in question is used, it must have one and the same form as well as meaning, when traced to its source. But if we look over the catalogue of words in an English or Dutch dictionary beginning with it, we shall hardly find one in twenty, nay, in an hundred, which will bear the supposition that its first component part is neither more nor less than the imperative BE, from the verb To BE.

The field of conjecture is open to all; and whatever riches are discovered in it, they are the property of the discoverer, and he may reap the benefit of them without fear of ever becoming an object of censure or envy, provided he does not presume to circulate them as sterling. To indulge in fancies where we have little or no ground to go upon, is a harmless amusement; but to proffer the result of our speculations under those circumstances, as any thing which can be depended upon, is preposterous.

So many ages have elapsed since the Anglo-Saxon language first began to be distinguished from any other, it continued for so long a space of time to float in the mouths of savages and unsettled people, it underwent so many changes from the mixture of foreign idioms, that probably the rudiments from which it sprang are for the most part lost: and without these, it is impossible to trace the origin of every word that occurs in the language. It is but now and then we see a ray breaking through the clouds which obscure

obscure this scene; but now and then we can make an observation.

We see enough, however, to fix our judgement with regard to the true nature of prepositions, conjunctions, and particles in general: some of them have so near a resemblance to words considered as different from them, and still remaining in the language, that it is more than probable both belonged formerly to one and the same class.—"Αλλα, for instance, in the Greek language, called a conjunction, can be nothing but the noun ἄλλα, *τραίγματα* being understood—ERGO, in the Latin, the dative or ablative case of the Greek noun ἐργον *—ON, in the French, the Italian noun *huom*, or *uom* †—NOT in English, and NIET in Dutch, compounds, the one of NE and OUGHT, and the other of NE and IET: this last word having the same signification as OUGHT in English.

I mention this explanation of the word NOT, because it appears to be more natural and satisfactory than that which you have given of it, p. 512, of your Diversions of Purley; where, after some strictures on Greenwood's, Minshew's, and Junius's derivation, you express yourself on this subject in the following manner: *But we need not be any further inquisitive,*

* See Sanctii Minerva de Vocibus Homonymis. L. IV.

† Il peccato per lo quale huom dice ch'io debbo, c'era morte giudicato, io no'l commisi giammai. Bocace.

Il sonno veramente è com' uom dice,
Parente della morte.

Petrarque.

nor,

nor, I think, doubtful, about the origin and signification of **NO** and **NO**, since we find that in the Danish **NÖDIG**, and in the Swedish **NÖDIG**, and in the Dutch **NOODE**, **NODE**, and **No**, mean averse, unwilling.

Nothing can equal the inadvertence, to say no more, which you betray upon this occasion. Had you bestowed one single thought upon the subject, you would not have put down **No** as a Dutch word; nor would you have called **NOODE** or **NODE** an adjective equivalent to **NÖDIG** in the Danish, and **NÖDIG** in the Swedish, and having with them the signification of **AVERSE**, **UNWILLING**.

NOODE, in Dutch, is the dative or ablative case of **Nood**, necessity; and is an abbreviation of **UYT NOODE**, *through necessity*. What is done through necessity, may be said to be done unwillingly and with aversion. These different expressions, therefore, are put down in the dictionaries as being equivalent, and the following phrase, *Dat heb ick noode gedaan*, may be found there translated, *I have done that unwillingly*. But does it follow that **NOODE** is an adjective signifying *unwilling*, *averse*? As well might a Dutchman say that **NECESSITY**, in English, is a word of this class, having that signification, because *I have done it through necessity*; is thus explained in his dictionary, *I have done it, unwilling, or averse, Iik heb het en-gaarn gedaan*.

From the similarity of the sound and spelling, I should suspect **Nödig** in the Danish, and **Nodig** in the Swedish, to be the same word with **Nodig** in Dutch; and, if so, its proper and primary signification is **Necessary**, and not that which you are pleased

to assign to it, *Unwilling, Averse.* And from this, and many other circumstances, I suspect, moreover, that your knowledge of the Swedish and Danish is of the same kind with that you possess of the Dutch—the mere result of some occasional inspection into the dictionary. Be that as it may, your derivation of *Nor* is absurd beyond measure ; but, absurd as it is, you make it your finishing stroke. It is after this specimen of your etymological powers, you tell your reader, as if conscious of something, I do not know what, *I hope I shall be permitted to have done with etymology* ; and so——you take your leave of him.

WITHOUT, nothing but the imperative of *þypð-utan*. To many this derivation may appear plausible ; but not so to those who understand any thing of the Dutch or the German : they will tell you, that *þeodan* will not coalesce with the preposition *ut* or *utan*, so as to make a compound word with it, any more than *ex* with *fieri* in Latin ; *out* with *become* in English ; and *hors* with *devenir* in French : they will tell you, moreover, that very different are the verbs *BEON* and *WEORDAN* ; and that if, by saying the one is incorporated into the other, you mean that both have the same signification, you are utterly mistaken. But no more at present of *WEORDAN-UTAN* : it ought never to make its appearance but to be laughed at.

You accuse Hermes of having blinded philosophy ; take care you do not commit a greater crime, possessed as you are with the rage of stuffing the language with words repugnant to its nature ; take care you do not poison the hallowed springs at which the English Muse delights to drink : the limpid stream may

soon lose its purity, if the course of it be altered. You tell us, that those who have no coaches must ride in sledges : but in your way there is no riding at all, not even upon a stick ; and if the rude forefather of the hamlet had no other way of communicating thought than that you mention, he must have felt happy whenever he could keep his thoughts to himself, as by that means he escaped a hooting.

1. *Afs be out a crupper.*
2. *Man join a nose.*
3. *Figs come beginning Turkey.*

This is the way in which he expressed himself when, in the first instance, he wished to say, *An ass without a crupper* ; in the second, *A man with a nose* ; in the third, *Figs come from Turkey* *. It is very well he is gone ; had he lived to the present wicked age, he must have had a bad time of it.

* *From, you say, p. 374, means merely BEGINNING, and nothing else ; and immediately after you add, it is simply the Anglo-Saxon or Gothic word FRUM, beginning, origin, source, fountain, author.* Ergo, some will say, it means something more than *beginning*. But I will not dwell upon this inference. There certainly is such a word as *Frum, Frim, or Fram*, in the ancient language ; and among the significations affixed to it by Lye, is that you mention ; but by the uncouth, unmeaning interposition of it in *Figs come beginning Turkey*, one would naturally imagine, that either the primary signification of it is lost, or that the expression is elliptical, and wants some intermediate word or words to fill up the chasm. It seems, indeed, a difficult matter to say any thing rational concerning the particular drift, not only of this, but of many more words without having recourse to one of these suppositions. *Frym* and *From* are very likely allied to *Form, Forma, Primus*, and it is not improbable, that both are derived from the word *For*, originally a noun ; but what the original meaning of that word is cannot be ascertained.

Junius, Skinner, Wallis, Johnson, and Lowth, all concur in deriving LEST (a conjunction) from LEAST (adjective). You are very positive it is not derived from it: “*I will venture to affirm, say you, that LEST, “for LESED, is nothing else than the imperative of “LESAN dimittere; and, with the article THAT, either “expressed, or understood, means no more than hoc “dimisso, or quo dimisso.*”

And I also will venture to affirm something, which is, that there is great reason to reject, on this occasion, if not your hypothesis, at least the confidence with which it is delivered; and if my assertion prove true, *it will furnish one caution more to learned critics, (I give your own words), not to innovate rashly: left, while they attempt to amend a language, as they imagine, in one trifling respect, they mar it in another of more importance; and, by their corrupt alterations and amendments, confirm errors, and make truth more difficult to be discovered by those who come after them.*

BETAAL* is a very common word among the Dutch; it is generally the first one hears when one lands any where in their country; and truly the English are not much behind hand with them in the use of its equivalent. For since they observed, that by urging it frequently their neighbours grew fat and lusty, and sufficiently strong to meddle with other people's things without asking leave, they also became fond of it; and the imperative LES, from the verb LEZAN, was no more common among the Anglo-Saxons, than the imperative mood of the verb to PAY is among your modern English: they use it even

* The imperative of BETAALEN, to pay.

in contracts of mutual civility, insomuch, that when, on the one side, is to be given up a certain portion of judgement and belief, and, on the other, certain good reasons for it, they will not give you a pennyworth of the first article, unless you *pay* them ten times the value.

In the name of wonder, will you say, what do you mean by this strange digression? It is intended, Sir, as a hint that your countrymen will not pin their faith upon your assertions, and pay you a compliment into the bargain, unless you shew cause why they should do so.

On what ground does your etymology of the particle here in question rest, that you should be so positive about it? *LEST* for *LESED*, say you, as *Blest* for *BLESSED*. This is the whole of what you tender for our deference to your opinion; and, small as the consideration is, it is made up of bad coin.

LESAN and *BLESSIAN* cannot, whatever you may think of the matter, be coupled together, as belonging to one and the same order of verbs; the one has a single, the other a double consonant before the termination of the infinitive mood: that forms a long, this a short syllable in the participle passive; and consequently, though the latter will bear the contraction, it does not follow that the former will bear it likewise. And thus much for the bad coin with which you attempt to put us off.

Chillingworth says, no matter where, *You make use of such indirect and crooked arts as these to blast my reputation, and to possess mens minds with disaffection to my person, lest peradventure they might, with some indifference,*

difference, hear reason from me. And the following is the turn you give this passage, in order to shew the justness and efficacy of *hoc dimisso*.

“*You make use of these arts.*” Why? the reason follows, *Lesed that, i. e. Hoc dimisso—Men might hear reason from me—Therefore you use these arts.*

Would any one imagine this curious aphorism to be intended as an explanation of the particle **LEST**, to shew at once, and clearly, what its origin and meaning are? It will require some quickness of apprehension to make it out in any given time whatever. But you are not the first who has made things, dark of themselves, a little darker by endeavouring to explain them.

LEST, used as a conjunction, and attended by **THAT**, means, as you imagine, neither more nor less than *That being dismissed or discharged, or laid aside.* To give your explanation all the chance possible, let us not stand upon trifles; let us choose out of these three expressions that which is most favourable to it, namely, *laid aside*: by using it instead of *Let*, in the above-mentioned passage, the whole will run as follows, *You make use of these arts, LAID ASIDE THAT, men might hear reason from me.* Now, though this conveyance for thought does not run quite so fast as English conveyances do in general, yet, as it may very well be compared to a dray-cart, dragged by an heavy, slabby, flat-footed horse, we will not deny it here the appellation of a conveyance for thought; we shall only take notice of the direction in which it moves.

I imagine, that when a man says, *You make use of*

these arts, lest men might hear reason from me, theis expression implies an apprehension in him that some thing may happen, and at the same time a strong desire to prevent it. And I am the more inclined to think so, as the French use upon this occasion, *De peur que*, *De crainte que*; the Dutch, *Uyt vreeze dat*; and the Latins their emphatical *NE**: expressions which all indicate clearly, that the above-mentioned circumstances do actually take place upon this occasion. But how can they be implied in this lame and insipid phrase, *You make use of these arts, laid aside that, men might hear reason from me?* It barely declares that such a thing may happen, and has no kind of tendency to express a fear that it may happen, or a desire to prevent it: *LEST THAT*, consequently, must convey something more than the bare idea of *quo* or *hoc dimisso*: and your fledge, though we might put up with the slowness of its motion, yet, as it moves in a contrary direction to that which is intended, must be laid aside in the present instance.

Dr. Johnson gives us, in his dictionary, the following deduction of the word *LEST*.

LEST, conjunction from the adjective LEAST, that not. On this deduction of the Doctor you make the following remark: *This is a curious one indeed, and it would puzzle as sagacious a reasoner as Dr. Johnson himself, to supply the middle step to his conclusion, from*

* They say, indeed, *Cave putes*, *Cave credas*; but it is evident that *NE* is understood, and that even in this way of speaking there is an ellipsis of *Ut*; and that the phrase at full length is *Cave ut ne credas*; so Terence, *Ulciscar ut ne impune in nos illuseris*; and Tully, *Opera datur ut judicia ne fiant*.

LEAST (which always, however, means something) to, THAT NOT, which means NONE AT ALL. I beg leave to make some remarks in my turn.

1. If there be any thing curious in the present case, it is your criticism on Dr. Johnson's explanation, and your recommendation of *hoc dimisso*, or *quo dimisso*, in the room of it. From what has been already alledged against it, there is no great hope of *hoc dimisso*, or *quo dimisso*, ever making its way so as to get the start of any explanation whatever; let us, however, compare them together, by trying their respective efficacy on the above-mentioned passage.

Dr. Johnson's explanation of it is, *You make use of these arts, THAT men may NOT bear reason from me.*

Your improvement upon Dr. Johnson is, *You make use of these arts. Why? the reason follows: Lezed that, i. e. Hoc dimisso—men may bear reason from me.*

Is it not astonishing that a man should plume himself on having substituted this strained and far-fetched manner of speaking, for the easy and natural explanation which precedes? But say you,

2. LEAST always means something, and Johnson employs it as a mere negative. Quirks and quibbles, Sir, will not do in the search after truth. When I hear it affirmed of a man, that he has friends nowhere, and least of all at court, I should be glad to know how many friends I may reasonably suppose that man to have at court. Or, when I read in Latin, *Minime gentium, res minime mira, spectaculum mi-*

nime gratum; or thus, *Operam das ut minime meis obtemperent consiliis homines*; I should take it very kindly, if you would let me know what that something is which the word MINIME implies; because, when that is done, it will be an easy matter, not only to settle your dispute with Mr. Harris, about the manner of supplying the article in the Greek *, but, moreover, to adjust public matters so, as that there shall be no more discontented people, no more effusion of blood, and dismemberment of the empire.

3. LEST, in the sense of THAT NOT, or the NE emphaticum of the Latin, is generally written in the ancient language thus, LÆST; and what is more to the purpose, it is there preceded by the article THE or THY. Papnose he hine ð lær hí on hpyle to him ineoðan. “ Caverat ne in aliquam domum ad “ se introirent †.” þæt hý ð folcƿiht aƿehton þy lær ænig man cƿeðe. That they common right should declare ‡ D lær pe ƿpelton, Ne moriamur §.— And as lær is used also in the Anglo-Saxon for the comparative of lytel, parvus, it is evident that þ lær answers to the modern THE, or THAT LESS. þ lær to THAT LEAST, supple, OF ALL THINGS; and if so, it will require no great effort of genius to find out the middle step from LEST to THAT NOT; and you will do well to look for it yourself, as it will furnish you with an easy and natural explanation of the word

* See Diversions of Purley, p. 100.

† Bed. Hist. Eccles. Lib. I. cap. 21.

‡ Alfred's Will, p. 12.

§ Exod. xx. 19.

LEST, and put you, perhaps, upon acknowledging, as I think you ought to do, that, in this, as well as in many other instances, you have been too precipitate in condemning Johnson.

I have now gone over the greater part of your seventh chapter; and from the remarks I have made, there arises a strong presumption, that, if a few of your etymologies can bear examination, most of them cannot; being grounded on words, either not in the language, or not connected with those of which they are supposed to be the origin. And having proceeded thus far, it will perhaps be expected that I should go on, and extend my remarks to the remaining part of your work; but the exceptionable places being less numerous there than in the preceding chapters, and mostly of the kind already noticed; so that in animadverting on them at large, it would hardly be possible to avoid repetitions; I shall content myself with a few general observations, and then conclude.

Notwithstanding the unfavourable impressions I received from your manner of tracing the conjunctions to their origin, that is, to the primitive word in the language from which they spring; I must do you the justice to say, that I have read with pleasure, and even with some advantage, your ninth and tenth chapters, which treat of prepositions and adverbs. The light in which you place these parts of speech is new, and well calculated to turn the attention of the studious in general from idle and endless subtleties,

to

to the contemplation of truth, and acquisition of real knowledge. Your deductions here are, upon the whole, the reverse of what they were before; for, except such as rest upon supposed imperatives, they are in general plausible, and many of them unexceptionable. In short, I think this the best part of the work. I am more particularly pleased with the following reflexion *: *The explanation and etymology of these words require a degree of knowledge in all the ancient languages, and a degree of skill in the application of that knowledge, which I am very far from assuming.* After a sentence so full of modesty and discretion, so much to your honour, one is grieved to see you meddle with the *benedcnste lip*, *en enderste lip*, and with *Spic-span*, and *Spik-spelder*. O fie upon *Spic-span* and *Spik-spelder* †.

As you seem to aim at some signal distinction in the etymological career, let me prevail upon you not to be too free with the Dutch. I know that any one

* P. 491.

† In Dutch they say, *Spik-spelder niew*, and *Spyker*, means a warehouse, or a magazine; *Spil*, or *Spel*, means a spindle; *Schiet*, *Spoel*, the weaver's shuttle; and *Spoelder*, the shuttle thrower. In Dutch, therefore, *Spik-spelder niew* means new from the warehouse, or the loom, Div. of Parl. p. 568.

N. B. 1. Two points over a single vowel not in use with regard to Dutch words. 2. *Spyker* means here a nail. 3. *Spel* for *Spil*, not in the Dutch language. 4. *Spoelder*, ditto. 5. *Spelder*, here an oblique case of *Spelde*, a pin †. 6. *Spoelder*, in the premisses, a shuttle-thrower; in the conclusion, a loom. Sum total of the faults in this article, Six.

† See Halma, in *Spulde*.

is at liberty to mangle and torture it ; but there are a thousand reasons why you should not. For, not to mention that a man may be possessed of an uncommon share of merit, both as a scholar and a gentleman, without knowing a word of it ; this, like other languages, has its true and false currency ; and though the mistaking and tendering the one for the other is deemed but a slight offence in some ; with regard to dealers in etymologies, it is reckoned a capital one. And as the field of glory lies open to you in so many places, why should you attempt to enter it at one so dangerous ?

Let me add another piece of advice, which you seem to be much in want of : when you are about some new discovery, take care not to dwell too long upon one and the same thing. It is well known, that by the continual pressure of the same idea upon the mind, its operations are greatly impeded. I remember to have read somewhere of a Greek professor, who, having made it out, as he thought, that the Greek language is the source of all the rest ; at every word he met with, whether in the German or French, Latin or Hebrew, would call out *Vox GRÆCA !* and be as positive about it, in case of any demur, as brother Peter about his brown loaf. Though this case is by no means similiar to yours, it puts one nevertheless in mind of your imperatives.

If you must put our gravity to the proof, by telling us that, *Man join nose** ; *Ass be out crupper* ; *figs*

* P. 348.

beginning Turkey, and the like, are the true prototypes of a man with a nose ; an ass without a crupper ; figs from Turkey *, &c. Well and good. We are ready to pay you the attention which is your due as a man of learning and genius. But be not too positive ; and remember, that if, in delivering these sentiments, we perceive the least attempt, or even desire, to pass them upon us as articles of faith, we shall think ourselves at liberty to relax in our attention, and turn into a jest what cannot be converted to any other use.

You make WITH, preposition as it is called, the imperative of WITHAN, $\gamma\! \phi\lambda\! \tau$ †, to join. There is such a verb in the ancient language, and from its signification, *conjugare, copulare*, it seems to bear some affinity to the verb WED in English, and *pedian* in the Anglo-Saxon. And thus far circumstances seem to favour your derivation of WITH from WITHAN, to join ; but others strongly militate against it. 1. It is hardly possible to determine which is the root, supposing there is a real affinity betwixt WITH and WITHAN. 2. WITH often occurs in a sense which does by no means accord with *conjugare & copulare* ; as for instance, in the English, to WITHHOLD ; the Dutch, *weederspreeken* ; the German, *widerstehen* ; and in many other words, it has the signification of the Latin particles CORAM, or ITERUM. But the most ugly circumstance of all, in the present case,

* P. 185. p. 375.

† P. 376.

is your having somewhere else derived * the preposition **WITH** from the *soi-disant* Anglo-Saxon *ƿýndutan*. I very much fear that this will bring to the ground your conjecture about **WITH** from *withan*, to join, and that *man join nose* must be given up as a lost cause; unless indeed you can prove, as you attempt to do, that there is a fallacy in that preposition which few people are aware of; that, Proteus-like, it is sometimes one thing, and sometimes another; that in the following phrases, **WITH mischance**, **WITH misadventure**, it means *be*, and is the imperative of *ƿýndon*; whereas in these, **WITH evil prefe**, **WITH harde grace**, it means *JOIN*, and comes from **WITHAN**, to join †. But this is a hard task indeed!

Truth, as you say, has been improperly imagined at the bottom of a well: it lies much nearer the surface. Had Mr. Harris and others, instead of diving deeper than they had occasion, into Aristotelian mysteries, contented themselves with observing plain facts; they would soon have perceived, that prepositions and conjunctions were nothing more than nouns and verbs in disguise; and the chapter of the distribution and division of language would have been settled and compleat long ago, to the contentment and joy of every body; whereas, in the way they pro-

* Mr. Tyrwhitt has observed truly, that **BY** and **WITH** are often synonymous; they are always so when **WITH** is the imperative of *ƿýndan* But Mr. Tyrwhitt is mistaken when he supposes **WITH evil prefe**, **WITH hard grage**, **WITH sory grace**—to have the same meaning: for, in those three instances, **WITH** is the imperative of *ƿýfλN.* Div. of Purl. p. 349. in a note.

† P. 349.

ceeded, their labour was immense, and the benefit equal to nothing.

Happy those, who, in their endeavours to explain science, are allowed to look behind the veil which conceals her from the common eye. Whatever be the object of their pursuit, if they are but allowed to contemplate it in its true light, and give such information about it as has not been given yet ; they think themselves sufficiently rewarded, and persevere with joy in application.

To many the study of particles may seem unpleasant and unprofitable ; but it is neither. The happiness which is felt by the Philosopher, and that enjoyed by the Grammarians, are nearly on a par, provided both originate in the discovery of truth. As to the utility of it, though trifling in itself, it leads to things of the utmost consequence ; and the most dignified of all sciences, Theology, often deigns to consult her humble hand-maid, the science of particles, the better to steer her way through the many difficulties which surround her *.

Professor Schultens was the first philologist who suspected prepositions, conjunctions, particles in general to be no more than nouns or verbs, and refused therefore to make separate classes of them, among those that comprehend the parts of speech.

* *Ac ne ipsa quidem, opinor omnium disciplinarum regina, theologia ducet indignum admoveri sibi manus ac debitum exhiberi officium a pede sequa grammatica : quæ tametsi nonnullis est posterior dignitate, nullius certe opera magis necessaria. In minimis versatur, sed sine quibus nemo evasit maximus. Nugas agit, sed quæ ad seria ducunt.*

Erasmus Epist. Lib. IV. Ep. 7.

But

But he confined himself in the application of this truth to the learned languages. You are the first who applied it to those which are called modern. It would be wrong not to acknowledge, that in this you have rendered the literary world an important service. For though you have not been allowed to proceed far in this career without frequent mistakes, yet your progress through it has been sufficiently marked with success to put others upon making some further discoveries. That this may be the final result of your lucubrations, and that you may live to see your system receive all the improvements of which it is susceptible, is the sincere wish of

Your most obedient servant,

I. CASSANDER.



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